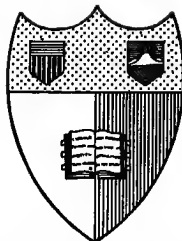


FRANCE
AND OURSELVES

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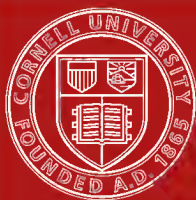
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FRANCE AND OURSELVES

INTERPRETATIVE STUDIES:

1917-1919

BY

HERBERT ADAMS GIBBONS

Author of "Paris Reborn," "The Reconstruction
of Poland and the Near East," etc.



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Published, February, 1920

TO

EMILE HOVELAQUE

CASPAR WHITNEY

WILL IRWIN

in memory of the constant silver lining in the
cloud. They never lost sight of it—and
God bless them for the work they
did in keeping together
France and ourselves!

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H. A. G.

Princeton, February, 1920

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**FRANCE
AND OURSELVES**

FRANCE AND OURSELVES

CHAPTER I

HOW WE CAN HELP FRANCE¹

BEFORE the United States entered the war a few Americans were helping a few French. The French as a people were appreciative of the aid that came from America, and there were remarkable testimonials of this appreciation. Our ambulances were seen on the French front, and Americans in Red Cross work lost their lives on the field of battle. In many places American hospitals, served by American doctors and nurses, cared for the French wounded. Organizations for relief-work were engaged in a multitude of activities, and the American Relief

¹ June, 1917.

Clearing House in Paris dispensed money by the millions and sent out boxes by the thousands. Other Americans were not content to work for France. They fought for France in the Foreign Legion and in the Aviation Corps.

But all this was the effort of individual men and women. The United States was neutral, and so long as the United States remained neutral, the American nation could not help the French nation in the death struggle. The heroism and the self-sacrifice and the warm partizanship of individual Americans did not atone for American neutrality. Whether the French should have understood our neutrality and have acknowledged our right and reason to remain neutral is not to the point. The fact is that we were neutral.

Only Americans who knew how France felt about America could realize how France felt about American neutrality. The feeling about America may have been erroneous; but only if it were erroneous (which God forbid!) could the feeling about American neutrality be unreason-

able. Have we ever understood the French conception of America? Far deeper than the impression, gained from contact with American tourists, of America as the land of dollars and dollar-chasing, lay the belief in America as the land of liberty, the defender of right and justice in the relations between man and man and between nation and nation. The French have idealized American history in much the same way that they have idealized their own history. Our national heroes—Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, and Lincoln—are as real to the French as they are to us, and the connection of Lafayette and Rochambeau with the birth of the United States is taught in French schools as it is taught in our schools. This feeling has been specially true under the Third Republic. We have been regarded as the sister democracy, different in manner of life and thought, different even in civilization, but alike in ideals. It was not yesterday that a portrait, a bust of Franklin or Washington was placed in French *mairies*; and other cities besides Paris long ago gave the names of the

fathers of the American Revolution to streets and squares.

In a spirit of historical detachment, far from the fray and unaffected by it, one may be successful in studying the causes leading up to the war and in pointing out their complexity and multiplicity. But the French did not do this. They could not do it. The storm broke, and broke upon them. The violation of Belgian neutrality brought the Germanic hordes into France. Civilians suffered, provinces were devastated, and through their initial unfair advantage the Germans were able to seize and hold northern France. The instinct of self-preservation called France to arms, but very quickly the defenders of their homes came to identify the national cause with that of human liberty and twentieth-century civilization. Before they had been in the war a week the Germans aroused in their opponents a feeling of moral revolt, dictated by international reasons fully as much as by national ones. Hence France looked to the United States not to help France in her own defense, the success of

which was assured by the Battle of the Marne, but in the defense of the principles which all Frenchmen believed were as dear to Americans as to them. We Americans who lived in France during the first thirty tragic months of the war knew full well that our humanitarian efforts were of no avail in the face of the fact of American neutrality. We spoke of American sympathy, proved by relief contributions and by editorials of New York newspapers. But the French ideal of the United States demanded official action by Washington. I believe I am right in stating that, despite the sore need of our material aid, France would gladly have forgone all that Americans were doing and could do for an official condemnation by the American Government of the policy and the acts of Germany.

At last the change—or was it the awakening?—came. Now we are allies of France. In time of war friends are synonymous with allies. Neutrality may be natural, reasonable, explicable, just; but what logic can be opposed to the thought, “He that is not with me is against me”?

Bygones are bygones. We have come into the war, and we have come in at the critical moment. We have come in whole-heartedly. Perhaps our aid is more appreciated for the timeliness of it and the unexpectedness of it. If we do not fall into the error of assuming that we are the *deus ex machina* and of adopting the attitude of saviors, all will be well.

We made a good beginning. Marshal Joffre was greeted in the United States with an outburst of enthusiasm and affection that put heart into the French nation at a moment of widespread discouragement. The April offensive had failed, the submarine menace was becoming alarming, and the state of anarchy in Russia was causing apprehension. The adoption of a series of practical measures at Washington, coinciding with the reception of the French mission, proved that American coöperation was not going to be confined to manifestations of sentimental hysteria. No ally of France has acted more promptly and more advisedly. We voted conscription, placed immediately enormous sums at the disposal of

our allies, gave the President control over the export of food-stuffs, passed the espionage bill, promised active participation on the battle-fields of France, and sent a fleet of destroyers to Europe as an earnest of our intention to sacrifice life as well as treasure in combating Germany.

Efficient and decisive aid, however, cannot be given by us if we go to France with an imperfect or incorrect conception of the essential conditions of our coöperation. We must see problems as France sees them, and we must help to solve them in the French way and not in the American way, remembering that the war is being fought on French soil. Otherwise we shall fail, and generous impulses will come to naught. Instead of a permanent understanding with France, there will be mutual disillusionment. Then the French will dislike us, and we shall dislike them. What calls more insistently for the rarest qualities and tact and delicacy than helping a friend?

We are accustomed to regard France as a nation that has broken with traditions of the past and has evolved a democracy similar to our own.

We contrast French individualism with German conformity, and think that the French are freed from the shackles of convention by the democracy they have constituted. We contrast French gaiety with English dourness, and think that the French are hail-fellow-well-met like ourselves. Let us correct immediately and entirely these notions. And since we are going to France, and France is not coming to us, let us remember that we must try to understand their point of view without insisting upon their understanding ours.

The French are bound by their past. Despite revolutions and republics, they are hostile to new ideas and attach a tremendous importance to form. Both in thought and action they are less individualistic than the English. They are proud and sensitive and reserved. Then, too, the French have been keyed to the breaking-point of nervous tension during three years of war. We cannot expect them to be calm and patient and grateful. If they need help badly, it is because they have borne the brunt of the German

aggression. France has given everything, suffered everything, and sacrificed everything where her allies have given and suffered and sacrificed only in part. Russia, like France, has had enormous losses in fighting, and portions of her territory are now occupied by the enemy; but Russia has more than twice the population of France, and the territories that the Germans hold are not an integral part of the Russian Empire or a vital part of Russia's economic life. England and Italy are not invaded, and their industries have not been paralyzed by the mobilization and the maintenance on the front through years of their manhood population.

We are going into a country the soil of which is consecrated by the life-blood of a million soldiers and desecrated by the German occupation. We are going among a people who have been and are still living in hell, and who stand undaunted and glorious in the midst of bereavement and desolation. It is the holy of holies that we are privileged to enter, and we must go in with bowed heads. We go to learn, not to teach, and the

man of us who says, "You ought never to have done it this way," or "I 'll show you how to do it," ought to be taken out and shot.

Yes, I mean what I say. Lack of consideration, thoughtlessness, bluntness, impatience to reform things, are qualities that have no place in the house of grief and suffering. Our opportunity to walk into the heart of France and to win the most precious national friendship on earth is unique; but, oh, how we need insight and gentleness! The problems are open, bleeding war wounds, every single one—military, political, economic, social. Of course one recognizes that many of them existed before the war or have been born of seed sown before the war. Many of them are due in part to defects in French character and French institutions. But the aggravation and seriousness of the problems have one cause—the war. And if the problems do not exist in England and Italy as they exist in France, it is because France is on the cross and the others are not. Congestion of ports, scarcity of ships, difficulties of railway transportation, bad repair

of rolling-stock, caring for the refugees, meeting the needs of the widows and orphans and mutilated, fighting tuberculosis and prostitution, ministering to the wounded, distributing food-stuffs and fuel to civilians, finding money, regulating the economic life of the country, moving troops, provisioning the front—all these are the problems that are confronting France and in the solution of which our help is needed.

Insight and gentleness. Can we have the insight unless we appreciate what France has been through, how these problems have arisen, and what the French think about them? Can we use the gentleness unless we put ourselves in the place of the dwellers in the house of grief and suffering and view the problems through their eyes? Let me cite only one illustration. An admirable movement was put on foot in the United States to raise a substantial fund for French war orphans. It was a great idea, and an appeal could be made with peculiar force for the children of France who were deprived of their fathers. Had not the French fathers died for us, for the world,

as well as for their own children? But while an American committee could fittingly raise money for French orphans, it could not fittingly distribute this money. No outsider, no matter how good a friend, could enter and exercise authority in French homes. He would encroach upon and influence religion and education, the precious prerogatives of the family and the state. An American committee could not give money to sectarian organizations in France for the bringing up of orphans. No matter how perfect the good faith and intention of the givers, the nation would resent the money coming from abroad for this sacred purpose if it had a string attached to it. To distribute money is harder than to beg it; to give it away is harder than to make it. In the case of the orphans, intelligent friends of France will keep their money in their pockets unless it is to be handed over unostentatiously to a French committee, representative of and designated by the nation.

We must be careful how we do things. We have to curb and keep in leash a natural instinct.

The typical American has his mind upon the goal. He is after results, and the way in which he accomplishes what is set before him he does not consider of much importance. The Frenchman, on the other hand, is hedged in from birth by form. There is a right and proper way to do everything, and one would rather not have it done at all than not do it in that way. The French pride themselves upon their individualism and their personal independence. They make fun of their governmental institutions and are remorseless critics of the bureaucracy and the police. But if you watch a Frenchman in discussion with a public official, a rare occurrence, you will notice that the crowd is invariably on the side of the representative of authority. The unforgivable sin in France is not being *en règle*. Hence, however much one may protest, he conforms; and established institutions and established procedure persist through revolutions and reactions just as they were in the olden days. When Bergson set forth his "philosophy of form," which was hailed as a novelty in Anglo-

Saxon countries, he was reflecting the Latin civilization to which he belonged.

President Wilson, in the face of adverse criticism and pressure from all sides, declined Mr. Roosevelt's offer to lead a volunteer army to France. He showed remarkable perspicacity. I have not the slightest doubt that Mr. Roosevelt and his friends were actuated by the sole motive of wanting to serve France; but their love of the French was greater than their knowledge of the French. Whatever their newspapers may have said, in the desire to avoid looking a gift-horse in the mouth, the people of France did not understand the Roosevelt scheme. It perplexed and worried them. They would have interpreted its adoption as a sign that our Government did not have sufficient prestige among the American people to help France in the *regular* way, or that the American people were so opposed to the war that President Wilson was compelled to fall back upon private initiative and enterprise for military coöperation with the Entente powers. It was only when telegrams from Washington an-

nounced that General Pershing would command the first troops sent to France, and that these troops would be an *official* American army, that the French realized the significance of America's entry into the war. Now they know that the American nation, represented by the Government at Washington, is helping France.

The primary and obvious form of aid to France is the sending of an army. Yet here also we have to exercise an unusual degree of self-restraint. The most spectacular help is always the easiest to give. While our flag on the French front is a *sine qua non* of the alliance, and while its moral effect cannot be overestimated in relation to American public opinion, the extent of our military coöperation must not be determined by the longing for excitement and adventure and glory that is being awakened among our young men. If the French and American Governments, working together in perfect harmony, decide that a large American army should be sent to France, well and good. But if other means of serving the common cause are pointed out to

us as more pressing and more vital, we must be ready to subordinate our generous impulses to the exigencies of the situation as it develops.

It is probable that France is going to need ships and fuel and war material before she needs fighting men, and our factories and our granaries may continue to be, as they have been in the past, more essential than our armies. In every kind of human endeavor, where coöperation is necessary, directors of concerted effort find that inefficiency in helpers is due to inability or unwillingness to perform the service required. The difficulty is not in getting the workers, but in getting workers who will take positions they can fill and which need to be filled. This is the prime—if not the sole—reason for unemployment. In this war France looks to the American nation for aid. Our Government at Washington directs the enterprise of aiding France. There will be unemployment, lack of opportunity to serve, only for those who want to dictate how they shall serve. The test of love for our own country as well as for France, of desire to help the world to a better

life after the cataclysm through which we are passing, comes right here.

Whatever *combinazione* French statesmen and diplomats may have dreamed of, whatever imperialistic aspirations may have received sanction in secret treaties between France and the other powers of the Entente, the voice of the people will count when it comes to the making of peace, and the people are not fighting for the advancement of selfish national interests. Only if Germany comes to the peace conference crushed and powerless, can the French public be seduced by the imperialists and led by the diplomats. There is an overwhelming sentiment in France that the objects of this war are the return of Alsace and Lorraine and the restoration of the invaded departments, with an indemnity for rehabilitation. For more than that France will not prolong the war, and France is not counting on American support to attain objects that are in conflict with French and American principles. We have a right, then, to believe and hope that comradeship in arms will lead to a durable *entente* between

France and the United States. That belief and hope form the basis of coöperation now. For otherwise, harmonious coöperation, even at this critical moment when our aid is so precious, would be impossible.

We must guard ourselves against the pernicious and illogical notion, advanced by the unthinking, that our aid is disinterested, and that we are giving it freely. There is a big difference between assuring our enemies that we covet nothing of theirs and assuring our friends that we look for no return for the help we give them. Benefactors bestow largess upon inferiors: between equals there can be only a *quid pro quo*. Without the idea of reciprocity our aid would be an insult to France. If we do not go to France with the idea that we are going to discharge an obligation that we have incurred, and are going for our own benefit fully as much as for the benefit of France, it would be wiser to stay at home. May we not have a false conception of our rôle in this war! We go not to save France, but to assist France to save the world.

I started with the question, How can we help France? I cannot end without the question, How can France help us? For it would be a waste of time to consider the former without having simultaneously in mind the latter. Long ago, at the beginning of our national life, France did for us what we in small measure are trying to pay back now. But we have not grown beyond the need of what France can still give. Far from it. Over against our New World energy, our proud progress in science and in things material, stands France's Old World refinement and proud progress in thought and things spiritual. France can be our gateway to the Europe that we do not know, the Europe whose moderation and modesty are needed to temper our neophytism and self-consciousness.

We are of mixed ancestry, but our political and social institutions, our literature and language, have stamped us in the Anglo-Saxon mold. With the good we have inherited the bad, and the bad has become accentuated in the unformed, expansive life of our vast continent.

We have taken from England her two disagreeable Teutonic traits, race superiority and cant, which have been fostered in the British Empire and in the United States, as they have been in Prussia, by Protestantism. The Germans have waked up late to the philosophy of the *Uebermensch* and the dream of world supremacy. Anglo-Saxondom has long practised the one and tried to realize the other. Alliance with the British Empire would tend to increase our self-esteem and our arrogance and stimulate our belief in a world mission, had we not the splendid anchor to windward of the alliance with France, virile exponent of the undying Latin civilization. Germany of the *Tugendbund* might have grasped this anchor, and not have broken from her moorings. The anchor is strong enough to hold us; but we must realize that it is an anchor, and we must be willing to use it.

CHAPTER II

THE TIGER OF FRANCE ¹

EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH did not live long enough to enter Italy at the head of his army; but the next in order among undreamed-of events has actually happened with the return of Georges-Eugène-Benjamin Clemenceau to the helm in France. Up to the last minute the wiseacres of the Palais-Bourbon, where sits the Chamber of Deputies, persisted in their belief that France's veteran politician and journalist could not become premier. They had every kind of good reason to give you. As if the ante-bellum record of "the Tiger" were not sufficiently damning from the politician's point of view, there could be added the three years of editorship of *L'Homme Libre*, *L'Homme Moins*

¹ November, 1917.

Libre, and *L'Homme Enchaîné*. Only the men too insignificant to waste ink upon had escaped the trenchant pen of "the Tiger." President Poincaré; Premiers Viviani, Briand, Ribot, and Painlevé; their coadjutors; ministers of foreign affairs and of war; generals of the armies; ambassadors and ministers; Allied statesmen; the pope; President Wilson and the rulers of all other neutral nations had received special attention in the famous "leaders" of the newspaper held in abhorrence and suspicion by the French censorship. Political parties—all of them—were treated as unsparingly as their chiefs.

To whom, then, especially in a country where political animosity is strong, especially at a time when international relations are "delicate," would Georges Clemenceau be *persona grata*? It was the duty of the President of France to choose the successor to the premiership. The choice would have to be approved by the Chamber of Deputies. If Clemenceau were picked to succeed Painlevé—and the hypothesis was incredible—would the magnanimity of Monsieur le Président be shared

by Messieurs les Députés? And what about the opposition of the Unified Socialists, who had solemnly pronounced in anticipation the exclusion of Clemenceau as a candidate for premiership? When Ribot tried to reform his cabinet, he failed because Painlevé declared that no cabinet could succeed when presented to the Chamber without the participation of the Unified Socialists. Later Painlevé attempted to do what he felt Ribot could not do, and he found that his first opinion was true.

The prophets were wrong. President Poincaré, overlooking his own personal reasons for disliking Clemenceau and the veto of the Unified Socialists, invited Clemenceau to form a ministry. "The Tiger" did not hesitate to accept the mandate from the hands of the man whom he had been holding up to scorn and ridicule ever since the war started. He had little difficulty in getting eminent men to serve with him, and secured a vote of confidence with the overwhelming majority of 418 against 65. Only Unified Socialists voted against him. Of the forty deputies who

refrained from voting, twenty-five were Unified Socialists. This means that all the Radicals and Radical Socialists except fifteen, all the Center and all the Right, gave their confidence to the Clemenceau cabinet.

Why were the prophets wrong? Simply because they had grown accustomed to look upon the formation of ministries as a matter of political bargaining and manœuvring, the premier-elect choosing his ministers and setting forth his program with an eye to the likes and dislikes of parties and party leaders. Viviani adopted this plan a month after the war began. Briand and Ribot and Painlevé followed in the same path. The politicians had forgotten the country, or at least they persisted in regarding the Chamber of Deputies as representing the country. Perhaps the Chamber of Deputies did represent France at the beginning of the war, but during this long struggle parliament and people have drifted apart. Clemenceau realized this. He did not have to depend upon securing collaborators who could carry the votes of his particular group, or

upon sweeping the deputies off their feet by an unexpectedly moving and virile setting forth of his program. He knew that the representatives of the people would not dare to refuse him their confidence. For France wanted Clemenceau, and president and parliament were not willing to oppose the country. Considerations of patriotism and of bowing before necessity dictated the choice of Clemenceau.

Some telegrams to American and British newspapers stated that the remarkable speech of the new premier when he presented his ministry to the Chamber of Deputies on November 20th won him the support of the country and instilled new life and determination to continue the war to the bitter end. This is the opinion of superficial observers, who reversed the rôles. The nation appealed to Clemenceau before Clemenceau appealed to the nation. Support and confidence were offered to him before he spoke. Clemenceau as premier, despite the inclination of president and parliament, is the result, not the cause, of the remarkable war spirit in France, which,

deep down in the hearts of the people, has never flagged.

During the summer and autumn of 1917 I enjoyed the privilege of traveling in every part of France. I found the people in a state of high nervous tension. The defection of Russia and the crushing defeat of Italy, coming in the fourth year of the war, would have been enough to discourage any nation that had suffered as France has suffered. But added to these outside disappointments were four grave facts of internal order, for which, rightly or wrongly, the French held their own Government and parliament responsible: the fiasco of the Saloniki Expedition; the failure to put through any large offensive movement on the Western front; general lack of confidence in the measures taken to provide agricultural laborers and to prevent a fuel and food famine for the coming winter; the half-hearted and inconclusive way in which the scandals affecting a former premier, a former minister of the interior, a former chief of secret police, a senator and editor of a prominent newspaper, a deputy,

and a president of a high court were being handled.

The French were sick of speeches containing explanations of the past and promises for the future. They were sick of the censorship, which continued to keep them in ignorance about what was going on abroad and at home. They were willing to continue their appalling sacrifices in blood and treasure, but they wanted to be sure that these sacrifices were not being prolonged in vain.

This state of the public mind was well known to President Poincaré and the leaders of different political parties whom he called into consultation. When the Painlevé ministry fell, Clemenceau became the man of the hour, because he was popularly supposed to be the embodiment of the growing spirit of protest against the way the war and internal affairs have been managed. He had denounced the placing of party above national interests, the blind attachment of parliamentarians to old methods, the formation of ministries through political deals, the criminal stu-

pidity of the censorship, the tendency to go off at a tangent in military operations (witness the Saloniki Expedition, which he bitterly opposed from the moment of its conception), the lack of decision and concerted policy in the whole conduct of the war, the improvidence in national fuel and food supplies, the inability of administrative bureaucrats to face and solve the transportation crisis, and the unwillingness of successive premiers and cabinet ministers to punish persons and groups in France who consciously or unconsciously were playing Germany's game.

In asking Clemenceau to form a ministry, President Poincaré heeded the insistent and warning cry of the nation: "Give us a premier who will use all the energies and resources of France to defeat Germany, who will see that we have fuel and food, and who will not allow our armies to be assailed from the rear through pacifist propaganda and through strikes inspired by German money!"

What France expects of Clemenceau is to play the rôle of a Moses and a Joshua combined. No

Frenchman since Thiers has undertaken a task so difficult, so delicate, so splendid. Like Thiers, Clemenceau brings to the task half a century of public life. He celebrated his seventy-third birthday shortly after the Battle of the Marne. His active political career began with the September Revolution of 1870, and covers the entire period between two wars. At no time during the Third Republic has Premier Clemenceau been a negligible factor in French politics. After interesting experiences in the United States, where he saw the close of the Civil War and the early years of Reconstruction (he remembers as vividly as if it were yesterday being present at the opening of Virginia's negro legislature), he returned to Paris to complete his medical studies. The year after he received his degree the Second Empire fell, and Clemenceau entered political life as Mayor of Montmartre. He represented Paris in the National Assembly of 1871. From 1875 to 1893 he sat in the Chamber of Deputies on the extreme Left. Since 1902 he has been a senator. From 1906 to 1909 he was premier. During his

long parliamentary career those three years were his only opportunity to participate in the government of France. The rest of the time he was a member of the opposition, and as deputy and senator and journalist he enjoyed the reputation of having caused the overthrow of more ministries than any other Frenchman since France has had representative government.

Never has Clemenceau shown more violent opposition to "the powers that be" than during the present war, and that is saying a great deal. How strange it is that the man who is unanimously considered the greatest destructive political force of the Third Republic is now called upon to save France!

Strange, illogical perhaps, but altogether natural. When heroic measures are needed, unusual men are called for. The instinct of a nation in danger can be trusted. France is in danger now. She is not apt to choose wrongly. At crises the man of the moment comes forth. Clemenceau has the keen wisdom of old age without having lost the ardor and energy and power of decision

of youth. He is absolutely without fear. He has no political future to think about, no obligations to bind him, no friends to spare.

In estimating the chances of success of the new premier, the most important factor is that he is the nation's choice. Politicians who listen to their personal feelings and their personal interests and try to make life difficult or impossible for the Clemenceau ministry will have the nation against them and will assume a terrible responsibility. If Georges Clemenceau, with the inspiration of the knowledge that France stands behind him, knows how to lead to victory, he need not fear parliamentary obstruction. For the sake of our common victory, let us hope that he does know how to lead and that the people know how to follow.

CHAPTER III

WORLD JUSTICE FOR FRANCE.¹

BEFORE August 1, 1914, the leaders in the political and intellectual life of France had given up hope of the return of the lost provinces. Most of them deplored the propaganda of a few *exaltés*, in which they saw a menace to the relations between France and Germany. The Peace of Frankfort was regarded as having definitely settled the status of Alsace and Lorraine. Even after Agadir, France remained profoundly pacifist. The Alsatians and Lorrainers realized this. They saw clearly that France did not intend to become the aggressor in a European war. Germany had proved herself stronger than France in 1870, and every decade since then had seen Germany grow more rapidly than France in population and in wealth. To offset this increasing

¹ January, 1918.

inferiority, France made an alliance with Russia and an *entente* with Great Britain. But both these arrangements were purely defensive. Whatever German apologists may write about the ante-bellum encircling policy of their present enemies, they are unable to cite a single text in the arrangements between France on the one hand, and Russia and Great Britain on the other, to justify the inference, let alone the fact, of an aggressive coalition. France devoted her energies to extra-European expansion. If her diplomacy can be said to have been detrimental to German interests or to have hampered Germany, the conflict of interests was in Africa and not in Europe. Alsace-Lorraine and the Peace of Frankfort were not in question.

Those who were most interested in the attitude of France toward Alsace and Lorraine were naturally the inhabitants of the lost provinces. If any could be expected and relied upon to interpret accurately French public opinion and the aims of French diplomacy, they were the Alsatian leaders. Despite the many incidents that

followed the granting of a wholly inadequate constitution in 1910, despite the false interpretation that might have been given to the Agadir crisis in 1911, the Alsatian irreconcilables did not look to France for aid. Quite the contrary. Instead of asking for a revision of the Peace of Frankfort, they made autonomy their program, and insisted that their anti-Prussian agitation had as its aim only, to quote the words of Herr Wolff, "the elevation of Alsace-Lorraine to the rank of an independent and federated state, like the other twenty-five component parts of the German Empire." On May 6, 1912, the following motion, presented by leaders of four of the political groups in the Reichsland, was voted without discussion by the Landtag:

The Chamber invites the Staathalter to instruct the representatives of Alsace-Lorraine in the Bundesrath to use all the force they possess against the idea of a war between Germany and France, and to influence the Bundesrath to examine the ways which might possibly lead to a *rapprochement* between France and Germany, which *rapprochement* will furnish the means of putting an end to the race of armaments.

What more striking, more conclusive proof of the contention, first, that the French Government was not a party, even indirectly, to the agitation for self-government in Alsace-Lorraine, and, secondly, that the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine had no reason to believe that France intended to be drawn into a war for their liberation and return to the status of French provinces? ¹

Germany cannot reproach France with not having stood loyally by the treaty she was compelled to sign at Frankfort. Nor can Germany reproach the people that she took forcibly from France with not having done their best to adapt themselves to the changed political allegiance rather than have Europe once more plunged into a bloody war on their account. Germany had her chance during forty-three years to assimilate Alsace-Lorraine without interference from France or France's friends. Europe, the whole world, accepted the Peace of Frankfort. Alsatians and Lorrainers, although they could not

¹ For a fuller discussion of this important question, see my "New Map of Europe" (9th American edition), pp. 1-20.

acquiesce in the treaty of which they were the victims, submitted to force, and as time passed with no attempt on the part of France to win them back, they tried to make the best of the terrible situation in which they were placed. If in 1914 there was still an Alsace-Lorraine question, the fault was entirely Germany's. No fair-minded man who reads the history of Alsace and Lorraine under German rule can possibly arrive at any other opinion than this.

When on the morning of August 2, 1914, the Germans crossed the frontier of France near Longwy, they annulled by their own act the Peace of Frankfort. They themselves brought up again, for decision by the test of arms, the fate of the lost provinces. France had to accept the challenge. This time, however, the war deliberately entered upon did not turn out to be a duel between two unequally matched nations and did not end quickly, as the Germans confidently expected, in the crushing of France. Great Britain entered the war on the side of France. Other nations, forced into the struggle by Ger-

many's disregard of treaty obligations and their own sovereignty and interests, joined what has come to be virtually a world coalition. Only if Germany is successful in dictating her own terms of peace at the point of the sword will she be able to prevent many questions, among which that of Alsace-Lorraine is one of the most important, from coming before the Areopagus of nations. Sensing the impossibility of victory by arms, Germany is already preparing throughout the world a propaganda to confuse and mislead the jury, if she fails to prevent the meeting of the jury by corrupting the jurors.

The Central powers, during the year 1917, by skilful manipulation and leadership of their armies, were able to gain new victories. But the odds against Germany and Austria-Hungary, from the purely military point of view, are too great to secure their final triumph on the field of battle. With the lesson of what has happened in Russia and Italy before us, however, we should be fools to believe that their chances are equally poor of winning by diplomacy what is denied

them by arms. Even if the powers of the Entente coalition hold together long enough to defeat Germany and her allies and assume to pass judgment upon the vanquished, there remains the hope of confusing, of tricking, the jurors. Democracies are inherently weak in waging war. Each one of Germany's enemies has been handicapped by the difficulty of securing and maintaining unity in the internal body politic. Unity in the conduct of the war has so far proved impossible of attainment. Unless there is a determined effort in each of the Allied countries to educate public opinion on leading questions that must be met and solved, the weakness of the coalition in war will be found to have been a less important disaster than the weakness of the coalition in making peace. For, since the war has become a war in which every family in the belligerent nations is called upon to contribute blood and treasure, the people will inevitably decide for themselves the objects for which they are fighting. For the first time in history the public opinion of nations, not the private opinion of

statesmen, will indicate the solutions to give to the questions before the peace conference.

Public opinion plays a more immediate rôle, in fact. Stupendous sacrifices in human lives, unprecedented financial demands upon the present and the future generations, have not enabled all of us together to bring Germany to her knees. It is mathematically sure that if we stick it out we shall have the victory. But the people who are paying the price want to understand clearly what the objectives are and what the objectives signify for each of the nations at war and for the world as a whole. Our statesmen cannot be too clearly warned that none of the belligerents intends to pull chestnuts out of the fire for another, and that those who have borne the brunt of the burden must not be kept indefinitely in uncertainty concerning our ideas of the terms of peace. All the Allied leaders are facing a situation where the exact objects for which the armies are fighting must be kept before the people clearly and unequivocally. These governmental aims must be satisfactory to the people. The differ-

ent Allied peoples will have to satisfy one another.

Alsace-Lorraine is a concrete illustration of the vital importance of our taking a stand on European problems. Competent observers of American thought tell me that in America there is no widespread, clearly pronounced national sentiment which insists upon the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France. If the American Government is committed to back France to the bitter end in this question, the Americans do not seem to know it. The French certainly do not. And yet winning back Alsace-Lorraine has become to the French the principal object of the war. I say this without hesitation. France would not have gone to war to win back Alsace and Lorraine, but the moment Germany attacked France the pent-up feelings of forty-three years broke loose. By those who did not know France, Marshal Joffre has been criticized for the initial, ill-fated expedition to Mulhouse and his proclamation to the Alsatians. The criticism is absurd. Joffre could not help himself. The Mulhouse

expedition was France's answer to German aggression. Heart, not mind, rules in the great moments of life.

In the middle of August, 1914, before the years of sorrow began, France's first fortnight of the war was summed up in a sketch Georges Scott made for *L'Illustration*. An Alsatian girl was clasped in the arms of a French soldier. A fallen frontier post marked *Deutsches Reich* lay on the ground beside them. Under the sketch was one simple word, "*Enfin!*" The sketch was reprinted by the hundreds of thousands. I have seen it in the trenches and in the rest camps everywhere along the French front, and I have seen it in the homes of patrician and bourgeois and peasant all over France. For a few months unpleasant experiences of the French troops in the retreat from Mulhouse and the discovery of false Alsatians domiciled in France caused a certain reaction in the attitude of the French toward the lost provinces. As the French came to realize that they had confused the German *immigrés* with real Alsatians, the feeling quickly passed.

Far from being a sign of lack of sympathy, misunderstanding and coolness at the beginning showed how deeply the French felt about Alsace and Lorraine. One is most sensitive about what is most precious. In the declarations of successive ministries and in the press since the early months of 1915, the return of Alsace and Lorraine has been a subject upon which difference of opinion does not exist among Frenchmen.

Before the war, also, there was no difference of opinion about what would happen if a European war did break out. Frenchmen of the present generation have been brought up from infancy to regard Alsace and Lorraine as French. The French mind, however, with its admirable quality of seeing and facing facts, believed the stolen goods recoverable only by a miracle. The French did not labor under the delusion that they would be able to win back the lost provinces in a war in which they stood alone against Germany, and they realized that no other nation would join them in attacking Germany for the purpose of wresting Alsace and Lorraine from the German

Confederation. To understand the paradox of those who prayed for the miracle to happen and yet shrank from the ordeal of a European war, we must realize that France since 1870 has lived in Gethsemane. The cross was always there, but —“let this cup pass from me.” I feel as if I were trying to analyze something too sacred for words. The analysis, however, has to be made. We Americans simply must understand.

It wounds Frenchmen to hear Englishmen and Americans interpret the demand for the return of Alsace and Lorraine as a question of revenge or of winning back territory. Our comrades-in-arms regard Alsace and Lorraine in a different light. To them the return of Alsace and Lorraine is a question of honor, of justice, of patriotism.

It is a question of honor. When the declaration of the deputies of Alsace and Lorraine was read at Bordeaux, and no answer could be given, shame and humiliation entered the soul of the French nation. The inhabitants of the eastern departments had fought loyally during the war

of 1870. France, having failed to defend them, purchased peace from the victor at the price of their slavery. After the transfer was made the inhabitants of Alsace and Lorraine continued to call to France. France was powerless to listen to their cry. The white-haired Frenchmen of to-day have never been allowed to forget the dishonor of their youth, and their children have inherited the shame and humiliation. Now France is fighting to wipe out the stain, to redeem the honor of the nation. There is joy in the crucifixion. But if it be not for redemption, the sacrifices of France are irreparable, and there will be death to this people, not resurrection.

It is a question of justice. The French are chivalrous by nature. They are keen about the wrongs of all subject races, and are as thoroughly imbued with the ideal of "the consent of the governed" as are Anglo-Saxons. The determination to continue to fight for the attainment of this ideal is enhanced in the particular case of Alsace and Lorraine by the fact that the people of the lost provinces have suffered for nearly half

a century through France's own fault. The diplomatic blunders of Napoleon III and his ministers, the incompetent management and leadership of French generals, the hasty proclamation of the republic, made it possible for Germany to oppress Alsace and Lorraine. If the war does not end in undoing the wrongs nearest home, for what reason has France been fighting? There are obligations to Belgium and Serbia and other allies, but France rightly puts first the obligation to those of her own household.

It is a question of patriotism. The increase of wealth and population and territory through the return of Alsace and Lorraine to the mother country is no small stake to fight for, and it is a justifiable one, since it means taking back what has been stolen. But material considerations have little weight in this war, the prolonging of which is costing France far more than what Alsace and Lorraine could mean in compensation. It would be folly, not patriotism, to continue to fight for material gain where the outlay is greater than the stake. France did not fully realize how

essential a part of the nation were the eastern departments until she lost them. The Third Republic has suffered more than can be measured by the amputation of a member of the national body. Like the populations of the Pas-de-Calais and the other northern and northeastern departments, the Alsatians and Lorrainers are an indispensable element of equilibrium in the political and economic and social structure of France. Patriotism, quite as much as honor and a sense of justice, cries out against the conclusion of a peace that does not stipulate the return, pure and simple, of Alsace and Lorraine. For Frenchmen believe that the maintenance of the frontier along the Vosges would mean political and social injury of a mortal character.

So much for the sentiment and for the interest of France. The coalition against the Central powers is also interested in the return of Alsace and Lorraine to France.

We are fighting for a durable peace, we say. Can this durable peace be secured otherwise than by the substitution of right for force in interna-

tional relations, by the removal of historic causes of conflict between nations, and by the reestablishment of all the belligerents within their legitimate boundaries? If we envisage peace solely as the forcing of the will of the conquerors upon the conquered, where, then, is the substitution of right for force? In every belligerent country the violent partizans, the cynics, and the reactionaries are banded together to combat the idea of the society of nations, and those who have taken at face-value the declared principles of the belligerents are called dreamers and dangerous fools. The great error of this war is the tendency to confuse the two terms, victory and peace. We must fight poison with poison, is the argument. Ergo, we shall have the victory only by doing as the Prussians do. All well and good. But if we go on to the next step and maintain that we must make peace as the Prussians would make it, we mock our dead. Are we crying out against the horror of a German peace, and in the same breath preparing to imitate what we consider no sacrifice too great to prevent our arch-

enemy from doing? If we are not idealists, we are realists. If we are realists, what is the difference between ourselves and our enemies? The defeat of Germany is not an end. It is a means to an end. The end is the establishment of the principle that right makes might.

It is a pity that polemicists frequently fall into the trap of putting together clear and debatable issues. When they fail to see distinctions and when they make analogies where there is no analogy, they do not serve the cause in which their pens are enlisted. "Going the whole hog" is dangerous. Absurd exaggerations of Polish claims and the attempt to put the aspirations of Italian irredentism on the same footing as France's title to Alsace-Lorraine are examples of this. The successful pleader is he who knows what to leave out of his brief. Irredentist arguments, based on historical and ethnological considerations, can be met by exactly the same sort of reasoning on the other side. The question of Alsace-Lorraine is unique among the issues of the war. It must not be confused with certain aims of Italy, or

with the revival of medieval states, some of which never existed as we conceive national organisms to-day.

The programs of partizans for remaking the map of Europe reveal the ignorance and inconsistency of those who present them. They are conceived not with the idea of rendering justice, but with the thought of breaking the power of the enemy. There is no effort to distinguish between territories incorporated in their present political jurisdiction before the inhabitants as a whole had developed national consciousness and territories whose present political status was a violation of the will of the people concerned at the moment it was established, and has remained a violation of their will ever since. Of the latter category, Alsace-Lorraine stands out as the one clear case against Germany.

Hence the members of the coalition against the Central powers have a common interest in insisting upon the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France. Restoration to their rightful jurisdiction of the provinces wrested from France by

force in 1870 will be the tangible symbol of our victory. It will mean the triumph of the principle for which we are fighting. It will prove to our enemies that we have been able to succeed in what we have set before us, the refutation of the doctrine that national expansion secured and maintained by force can receive the assent of the world. For a new order in international relations will be born of this war only by the abandonment of the doctrine of Cain that has heretofore been the basis of international polity. Unless our own national interests have dictated to us the wisdom of opposing a neighbor's title by force of arms, we have invariably accepted de facto extensions and changes of sovereignty. There never has been an international conscience. When we thought our own interests were at stake, we howled and sometimes backed our protests by force. Otherwise, we shrugged our shoulders, and said, "*Laissez-faire!*"

The future of Alsace-Lorraine is not a question between France and Germany. It is a question between the world and Germany, and

we must see it that way. If Europe has been an armed camp since 1870, if the theft of Alsace-Lorraine was the beginning of a long preparation that visited upon the world its present calamities, is Germany alone to blame? What nation went to the aid of France at that time? What nation listened to the cry of distress of Alsatians and Lorrainers? What nation refused to accept the Peace of Frankfort? Because we tolerated this crime against civilization we all have our direct responsibility. Only those who strike their own breasts, with a sincere repetition of *mea culpa*, are successful in leading sinners to repentance.

But we cannot treat the question of Alsace-Lorraine solely from the French and international point of view. The reader who is far away from the bitterness and passion of the war and who is not impregnated with the feeling of France about Alsace-Lorraine will ask pointedly, "Is the milk spilt?" He will not be satisfied with assertions of the continued loyalty of Alsatians and Lorrainers to France unless these as-

sertions are supported by facts. Forty-seven years is a long time, and the Anglo-Saxon world is not ready to accept the French contention, voiced by Monsieur Ribot, that "a title based on right cannot be outlawed." Whatever the basis of the title, time does outlaw. The world has moved forward rapidly, and the economic and social changes of the last half century are of a sweeping character. Because of the political evolution of nations, through universal education and universal suffrage, we have no right to assume that the children are bound by the action of their fathers or that they accept the judgments of their fathers. None can deny that the forcible incorporation of Alsace-Lorraine into the German Confederation was a violation of the principle of "the consent of the governed" in 1870. It does not follow per se, however, that the retention of Alsace-Lorraine in the German Confederation is a violation of that principle in 1918.

France's reasons for demanding the return of Alsace-Lorraine are convincing to her friends

and allies. It is clear, also, that their interests—destroying German militarism and vindicating international morality—dictate a support of France's demand. But unless we are sure that the present generation wants to become French, the right and the wisdom of the restoration are open to question.

Now we have come to the very heart of the problem. Two questions arise. Are the lost provinces in the German Confederation against their will? Do they want to be reincorporated in France? Polemicists make these questions one and the same thing, and try to give a common answer. The result is that what they advocate lacks conviction to the impartial reader. In the eyes of the seeker after the truth, who does not intend to be misled or fooled, the case for France is not helped by briefs in which strong points and weak points, statements based on fact and inferences, are presented together as of equal value. A study of the polemical literature of the Alsace-Lorraine question shows how cleverly the Germans have attempted to

strengthen their case by attacking the debatable arguments of their opponent.

Are the lost provinces in the German Confederation against their will? Yes. The proofs? Here they are: (1) proceedings of the Reichstag from 1871 to 1914 inclusive; (2) editorials and news columns of the papers of Strasbourg, Mulhouse, Colmar, and Metz, which fairly represent the whole of Alsace-Lorraine; (3) the testimony of ecclesiastics, Catholic and Protestant alike, who know the feeling of the people; (4) the attitude of the land-owning and industrial bourgeois classes; (5) the widespread refusal of young Alsatians and Lorrainers of all classes, in the face of exile, confiscation of property, and death, to serve in the German armies.

(1) The official reports of the sessions of the Reichstag show that the deputies of Alsace-Lorraine have never ceased to protest against their political status. These deputies were elected by universal suffrage, and their sentiments were known to their constituents. In the course of debates members of the Reichstag from other

parts of Germany have frequently admitted that the Alsace-Lorraine members were interpreting accurately the opinion of those whom they represented. Most striking is the evidence afforded by the official proceedings in 1910, 1911, and 1913. When the present war broke out the most prominent Alsatians and Lorrainers in the Reichstag fled from Germany and have carried on ever since their campaign of protest in France, Great Britain, and the United States. I know some of these men. Their record is clear. Fearless and of unquestioned integrity, they have sacrificed everything to represent their constituents before the public opinion of the world.

(2) Fortunately, just as members of the Reichstag were elected by universal suffrage and could speak freely, there was also liberty of the press in Germany. Newspaper editors, writers, and cartoonists were sometimes prosecuted and always persecuted by the German authorities. But there was no preventive censorship. In the newspaper files, which give the history of Alsace-Lorraine during the forty-three years between

the two wars, written from day to day by people on the spot, we have not only the opinion of editorial writers and cartoonists, but also the freshly recorded facts concerning events as they took place. The year 1913 shows no change from the year 1872. I was personally interested in the question of Alsace-Lorraine before the present war, and between the years of 1910 and 1914 I have corroborated the statements of outside writers by consulting the newspapers of the locality where these events occurred. So there is no doubt in my mind about the accuracy of what has been written to show the hostility of Alsatians and Lorrainers of the present generation to Germany and to their position in the German Confederation. The facts are against German polemicists who assert that this hostility is shown by a few irreconcilables.

(3) German supporters among the ecclesiastics of Alsace-Lorraine are almost without exception *immigrés*. In talking to priests and pastors of Alsatian birth I have not found one who does not tell me that the members of his flock

are anti-German. Since 1870, even when German menaces came in the form of orders from ecclesiastical superiors and meant the sacrifice of preferment, the clergy and the religious orders remained obdurate. During the decade before the present war the Catholic Church had just grievances against France. In 1914, however, wherever the French returned into Alsatian territory, they were received with open arms by the local clergy. Contrast this attitude with that of the Belgian clergy in face of the German invasion. The religious orders dropped with alacrity German teaching in the schools and, although French was to many of them a less familiar language, they started to use it at once. No pressure was brought to bear by the French military authorities inside or outside the schools. In view of the pro-Germanism of many Catholic prelates and priests in Spain and Italy, these facts are most significant. Most of the *immigrés* are Protestant; but the aristocracy of landed proprietors and the wealthy industrial bourgeoisie, the strongest elements of undying hos-

tility to Germany, are also Protestant. Pastors have proved themselves as implacable enemies of Germanism as are the priests. The religious question, then, does not enter in.

(4) In "The New Map of Africa" I wrote:

Personal observation on the ground has taught me that in the countries of whose nationalist and irredentist movements we hear so much, the prime movers and agitators are college professors and professional men and students who have little or nothing to risk or lose by a change of government. Landowners and manufacturers and business men rarely allow their heart to run away with their head. They know which side their bread is buttered on. They worship the golden calf of a *status quo*.¹

It is precisely because this statement is not true of Alsace-Lorraine that Alsace-Lorraine is unique among the questions of territorial change for which the belligerents are fighting. The lost provinces of France have benefited materially with the rest of Germany in the marvelous economic prosperity of the last few decades. We might argue that this prosperity would have come anyway, had Alsace-Lorraine remained

¹ See "The New Map of Africa" (3d American edition), p. 430.

French. But the fact of material benefit remains. Hence the failure of Germany to assimilate Alsace-Lorraine is all the more striking. The undying protest of those who have seen their lands increase in value and their factories in output is eloquent testimony of the truth that man does not live by bread alone.

I have resided in Turkey among the Armenians, and have been eye-witness of massacres. And yet I say that contemporary history records no more pitiful, no more heartrending martyrdom than that of the people of Alsace-Lorraine under German rule. For they have had to will to suffer. I wish it were in my power to forget some of the stories told me by all classes of Alsatians, the simple record of their family life. If one wants to realize the heinousness of the Peace of Frankfort, the absence of the quality of mercy in German official classes, the perversion of natural instincts of German imperialists, let him talk to fathers and mothers and wives and children among cultivated Alsatians and Lorrainers. Let him listen to the young men

who have not been able to escape wearing the helmet that is at the same time the brand of shame and the badge of slavery. Those whose memory goes back before 1870 may say:

“Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria.”

But the younger generation has never known one day of happiness, and does not agree with Dante. To the boys, as they grew to adolescence, German rule meant either wearing the uniform of the hated conqueror or a life of exile far from loved ones. The girls had no choice. Born and raised in an atmosphere of grief, if they have married, it has been with the prayer that God would spare them the anguish of having sons.

I am not exaggerating. Any Alsatian whose family believed that the higher patriotism was staying in the country and submitting to the Germans would assure you that “hell” is not too strong a word to describe his life. One mother told me that she gave up all her sons

when they reached the age of thirteen and has never had them in her home since; another, in the presence of her young daughters, said she would rather see them prostitutes than married to Germans; another, that, when her husband was dying, her son, on the French side of the frontier, climbed a high tree in the Vosges to try to look down into the valley of his home town. He knew, and in the mad frenzy of his grief tried to slip by the German guards. But they turned him back.

Who would dare to say that the martyrdom, because it was self-imposed, has no claim to sympathy? A proud race does not submit to the yoke of the conqueror, and only those call the vanquished fools who are themselves without honor and without traditions. If the Alsatians have been fools to choose during all these years to refuse to become reconciled to a government maintained by force of arms, then Washington and his companions were fools to suffer at Valley Forge; all who have cried, "Give me liberty or give me death," have been fools.

(5) At the time of the cession of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany it was difficult for the victims to decide what was best to do. Hundreds of thousands, immediately or during the period of transition that followed, chose France and went into exile. Others felt that it was their duty to stay and keep alive the protest. They believed that the fortune of arms might soon bring them back to France, while, on the other hand, if they moved out and let the Germans have their will, Alsace and Lorraine would be permanently lost to France. So they chose the harder part. In the course of time, when the situation seemed to become permanent and a new generation was born and came to manhood, the younger Alsations had to face obligatory military service. This was too great a humiliation for the cultivated classes. They did not oppose, but rather encouraged, their sons to leave.

It is impossible to give exact figures of Alsations and Lorrainers who chose exile rather than service in the German army. We do know, however, that the stream of young men from Alsace-

Lorraine to the other side of the Vosges never ceased. Even those who did their service in Germany could not bring themselves to fight with Germany. During the mobilization there were desertions by the thousands, and since 1914, Alsatians and Lorrainers have deserted on the Eastern as well as on the Western front whenever there was an opportunity. More than twenty thousand young men under thirty, who completed their military training in Germany, are serving to-day in the French Army. More than a hundred thousand others who were born in the lost provinces are wearing the French uniform. This refutes the German calumny that the motive of Alsatian desertion has been to shirk military duties.

Words count for little. If Alsatians and Lorrainers limited their protests against belonging to Germany to talk, we might well question their sincerity. But when they back up their protests by willingness to sacrifice life and property, do we want other proof of their attitude? It seems incredible that Herr von Kuhlmann should have

dared recently to pay a tribute to "the loyalty of Alsace-Lorraine to the German fatherland" in face of the following facts which deal with the year of our Lord 1917. (1) There are two Alsatian officers of pure blood in the German Army, while France has generals Maud'huy, d'Urbal, Micheler, Dubail, Mangin, Hirschauer, Lardemelle, Sibille, Levi, Leblois, Heyman, Blondin, Andlauer, Schwartz, de Metz, and Poudraguin, one hundred and forty-five other superior officers, and thousands of captains and lieutenants; (2) army orders show that the authorities dare not employ the regiments from Alsace-Lorraine in the Germany Army against France and that they hold them under strict surveillance everywhere; (3) tens of thousands of deserters are posted, and measures taken for the confiscation of their property in the German Empire; (4) the courts martial and the civil tribunals of the Reichsland, although they work under pressure, are at this writing—January, 1918—several months behind in trying the cases of

civilians accused of high treason and showing open sympathy with the enemy.

We pass to the second question. Do the lost provinces want to be reincorporated in France? An unqualified affirmative answer, supported by proofs, is impossible to give. We might argue that since most of the evidence I have cited to prove the hostility of Alsatians and Lorrainers to Germany implies affection for France, the presumption is strong in favor of the desire of the large majority to return to the old allegiance. But we must make an honest effort to take into account the law that seems to be almost universal in the working out of nationalist movements in border provinces. Small nations have a habit of playing off one big neighbor against another. Frequently the power that covets a province beyond its confines is encouraged by the growth of an irredentism that gives birth to false hopes. The irredentism is found to have been almost wholly on the side of the mother-land. For the border people too often receive favorably over-

tures from outside, and nourish at home a sentiment of affection for a neighboring power, only as the means of wringing concessions and securing an amelioration of their lot, politically and economically, from the Government to which they are subject. There is no real desire to change allegiance. If it came to the point of decision, might not the economic and social advantages of continuing to be a part of the state to which the province actually belonged be considered more precious than a better political status through union with another state?

We cannot ignore this point. The Germans have raised it, and their polemicists declare that the great bulk of the people of Alsace-Lorraine, who have used the old sentiment for France to secure autonomy and the banishment of Prussian functionaries, in the bottom of their hearts, prefer to remain in the German Confederation. For, like the Poles of Posen, they would not want to give up what they have enjoyed and have become accustomed to under German rule: a well organized, smoothly running, efficient adminis-

tration; enlightened social legislation for the working-classes; participation of the church in secular education; good pay and good pensions for functionaries and school-teachers; and, above all, economic prosperity through union with the greatest industrial state in the world.

Unfortunately for Germany, however, Alsations and Lorrainers, like Poles and Danes, have not been allowed to enjoy the benefits of belonging to the German Confederation under the same conditions as the German states. Posnania and Schleswig were incorporated into Prussia, and lost their identity. Constituted as a Reichsland, Alsace-Lorraine has always remained a Reichsland. From 1871 until the present time—and never more than since the beginning of this war—the people of the lost provinces have been made to feel that they are a conquered race. There was no serious attempt to assimilate or reconcile them. They were not left to themselves with the dignity and privileges of membership in the German Confederation. 'Their governors, their functionaries, their school-masters,' their

railway and municipal officials, have always been foreigners enforced upon them by Berlin. The Germans chose the rôle of conquerors and exploiters. Perhaps they could play no other rôle. Perhaps they did not want to play another rôle.

The consequences have been disastrous for Germany, favorable for France. Different in race, antipathetic in culture, always mindful of the fact that they were made German subjects against their consent, the people of Alsace-Lorraine, even if they have misgivings in the purely material sense about returning to France, as France has evolved since 1870, certainly prefer France unknown to Germany known. In 1872, when the last days of choice between exile and German allegiance drew to a close, thousands of Alsatians who had hesitated for a year, rich and poor alike, emigrated to France. When asked why they were leaving for France without knowledge of where they were going or what they were going to do, simple peasants responded, "We shall not die Prussians." The spirit of 1918 is that of 1872.

If the French and the Alsatian leaders who are advocating the return of Alsace and Lorraine to France without conditions are sure of the sentiments of the people of the lost provinces, why not a plebiscite? Would not that be the simplest and the easiest and the surest way of finding out the real sentiments of the people of Alsace and Lorraine, and at the same time of maintaining in the peace conference the principle of deciding the political status of debatable territories on the basis of "the consent of the governed"?

The plebiscite idea has been mooted by advanced thinkers and by socialists, and was adopted officially by the Russian revolutionists. But an *ante-factum* plebiscite, nowhere easy to arrange, is not at all feasible in Alsace-Lorraine. The arguments in its favor are wholly theoretical. The arguments against it are practical and, to those who know local conditions or take the trouble to study them, convincing. History has demonstrated that an occupying army can carry a plebiscite if it will. Even were both armies

withdrawn, and the plebiscite conducted under neutral or indigenous auspices, Germany's facilities for espionage, perfected as they are in the Reichsland, would remain. With the future uncertain, fear of reprisals would prevent a free vote. Would it be fair to deprive exiles, driven from their native land by the consequences of the Peace of Frankfort, of their votes, and allow *immigrés*, nine tenths of them German functionaries or children of functionaries, to have a part in deciding the destiny of a land of which they are not natives and to which they are attached by no traditional or cultural bonds?

The proposition of a buffer state is inadmissible. Not only would it mean the economic ruin of the country between the Vosges and the Rhine, but it would also be planting the seed for a future war. Alsace-Lorraine could not live alone. No greater misfortune could come to the inhabitants of this border-land, to Germany and France, to the whole world, than the neutralization of the rich provinces. They would remain a bone of contention as they have in the past.

Only if Alsace-Lorraine is given back to France will the balance of power be restored in Europe. Only this solution of the problem will assure Alsatians and Lorrainers the opportunity to speak for themselves—an opportunity they have lacked since 1870. When they become again an integral part of France, the election of deputies and senators to the French parliament will take place. It will be a genuine plebiscite. France does not fear this plebiscite. Otherwise, it would be folly for her to make the return of Alsace-Lorraine a war aim.

Since August, 1917, in the fourth year of French reoccupation, I have had the privilege of visiting the reconquered portions of Alsace twice. I have wandered at will from town to town, and have seen, in the light of the tragic and uncertain present, manifold evidences of loyalty and affection and devotion to France. In schools, in factories, and in *mairies*, I have observed the results of French administration. Almost all of the French authorities are Alsatian by birth and tradition. They are fully alive to the

problems they have to face. They realize that the reassimilation of the lost provinces in the French republic will necessitate changes in the political organism of France, changes in law and the spirit of administering law, changes that are economic and social fully as much as political. But France is willing to accept the task before her. She is eager to receive again into her bosom the provinces over the loss of which she has suffered.

Answering a question in the House of Commons, Mr. Balfour said recently that since August 4, 1914, the return of Alsace and Lorraine to France has been one of Great Britain's war aims. Since April 4, 1917, has it not been also one of our war aims? Deep down in the heart of every American is a passionate love for France, a firm determination to see that the wrongs of France at the hands of Germany are righted. France cannot be herself again without the return of Alsace and Lorraine. At this critical moment when the burden of France is immeasurably greater than ours it is our duty to give her

renewed inspiration for the struggle. It will come only from an official declaration of the American Government that we are fighting for the return of the lost provinces to the mother country.

CHAPTER IV

THE INDUSTRIAL EFFORT OF FRANCE DURING THE WAR ¹

ON the last day of August, 1914, the superintendent of a steel-plant said to me: "You have heard that the government is preparing to go to Bordeaux. Since Charleroi, it is not surprising news."

"Yes," I answered, "the panic seems to be on. But you have confidence, have you not, that you can hold your people?"

"Oh, the Parisian working-man does not think of flight. He has nowhere to go, and no money to go with. Anyway he has much more *sang froid* than the bourgeois."

Three weeks later, while we were still rejoicing over the Battle of the Marne, I met the steel-

¹ February, 1919.

manufacturer in a restaurant, eating sauerkraut and sausage. Beside his plate stood a big mug of beer. It was just as if there were no German invasion.

"Back from Bordeaux?" I asked, jokingly, for that was the teasing question of the moment. To my astonishment, he answered affirmatively.

"I must explain," he added, "though you know I am not the *froussard* type. But the explanation is confidential. You must say nothing about it until after the war. I was summoned to Bordeaux by the Government with other metallurgists and members of the Comité des Forges. What we were told down there in Bordeaux would have been a real tragedy if we had taken it as a tragedy. Thank God, there was n't a man of us who lost his nerve. We French are a happy-go-lucky people, perhaps, but we do know how to rise to emergencies."

When the waiter had taken the order, the steel man told me about the munitions situation in France. The war is over. Now—for the glory of French industry—I can write about what I

learned that night, and what I have heard and seen since.

A few weeks of fighting had upset the theories and calculations of strategists, publicists, economists, military critics, and statesmen. It had been an axiom that the next European war would be very short. The decisive battles would take place within the month after war was declared, and the decisive factors would be speed of mobilization and ability to use to the greatest effect the means of destruction amassed beforehand. Consequently, military authorities had concentrated their attention upon mobilization and transportation. France and Germany had both worked out their plans for "the next war" with the idea of giving quickly the decisive blow or stopping once for all the enemy's offensive. Germany's preparations were more thorough than those of France, and on a larger scale. But no more than the French did the Germans conceive the possibility of continuous fighting, with artillery preparation and support, extending over hundreds of kilometers and lasting

through weeks. The war had not been on a month before it was realized—on both sides, luckily!—that the amount of artillery and the supply of ammunition were woefully inadequate to the new necessities of offensive and defensive fighting. Ammunition was being used ten times as fast as was anticipated.

When Monsieur Millerand, the Minister of War, summoned to Bordeaux the leading steel and iron men of France, it was to tell them that the fate of the country was in their hands. The 75-cm. field-artillery cannon was proving itself, as had been foreseen by the Balkan Wars, the weapon *par excellence* of armies in the field. But the consumption of shells was far beyond what had been provided for. If France was going to make full use of this one source of superiority over the Germans, a supply of shells would have to be furnished without delay a thousand per cent. in excess of the capacity of the state arsenals. Unless private firms could produce these shells the cause of France was hopeless.

The estimates given by Monsieur Millerand

to the steel men staggered them. State arsenals were producing twelve thousand shells a day. Before the Germans resumed their offensive, the armies must have at least one hundred thousand 75-cm. shells a day. And along with this mammoth increase in shell production, the War Department would look to French factories for cannon, auto-trucks, shells of larger caliber, explosives on a scale never dreamed of, and a bewildering amount and variety of railway material. Steps were being taken, of course, to import, especially from the United States. But in the final analysis France would have to rely upon her own industrial resources.

The little group to whom Monsieur Millerand outlined his demand could have given many reasons to prove the impossibility of executing it. General Joffre's forced retreat abandoned to the enemy the industrial regions of the north and east, which contained the greater part of France's plants for the production of steel, and most of her iron and coal. In the invaded regions were 70 per cent. of France's coal and 80 per cent. of

her iron ore. The north and east had contributed four fifths of France's coke and four fifths of her cast-iron and steel. Not only had these resources been lost to France. They had been added to the enemy's producing capacity. Before the war, France imported annually twenty million tons of coal and three million tons of coke. Most of the coke came from Germany, and was destined to the steel-plants of central France and Normandy. Even could foreign supplies of coal and iron be drawn upon, transportation was lacking.

The problem of labor was not less formidable than that of raw materials. Since the possibility of a long war had not entered into France's calculations, the mobilization of industry was not foreseen. The military arsenals were called upon to send an important part of their personnel to the front. Exemption was not granted to superintendents, engineers, and working-men of private establishments. Every plant represented at the Bordeaux conference was crippled by the mobilization of its staff and hands, as well

as paralyzed by the commandeering of transportation facilities for military purposes. To call back at that critical moment the men who had gone to the front was a delicate matter. National sentiment was against it, and could not be enlightened as to the necessity of such a measure without revealing France's weakness to the enemy. It was the nation's instinct that the armies were all too small to stem the German onslaught. Feeling was bitter against *embusqués*.

There were also technical difficulties. Before the war, the French Government manufactured its artillery and shells. Private industry was called upon only for raw materials. Steel was delivered in raw state according to serial specifications, and had to pass the most rigid inspection. The Government made cannon at Bourges and Puteaux; munitions at Lyons, Tarbes, and Rheims; rifles at St.-Etienne, Châtellerault, and Tulle. For accessories, each *corps d'armée* had its arsenal. The specifications for the 75-cm. shell demanded manufacture by hydraulic

presses. As the shell was a bottle with thin sides, the steel had to be highly tempered. Then there were the copper cases, and the fuses, with seventeen parts to think about. The manufacturers at Bordeaux knew they could not improvise hydraulic machines and produce an unlimited quantity of high-tension steel.

Doctor Schroeder assured the German Ironmasters' Association on January 31, 1915, that the French metallurgical industry was paralyzed by the invasion of the northern and eastern industrial regions to the point of hopelessly compromising the national defense. But the *Herr Doktor* knew nothing of the Bordeaux meeting, and of how Monsieur Millerand's appeal was being answered at the very moment he announced complacently the ruin of French competitors. One of the most damning indictments of contemporary Germany is to be found in just such speeches as this, which reveal a lack of moral sense in the industrial leaders of the German people. But we owe much to the tendency of these *Herren Doktoren* to believe that the fatherland has a

monopoly of organizing ability and scientific knowledge, of power to mobilize and utilize material forces. Victims of their own conceit, the Germans discounted the possibility of France mustering an army in the rear, with captains of industry in command, to put into the hands of the army at the front the means of saving the world from *Deutschland über alles*. On our side, when we come to write the history of the war, let us not look for the effort and the genius, which brought the victory, in generals and combatant troops alone.

During the winter of 1914-15, when the armies were digging themselves in from the North Sea to Switzerland, the steel and iron manufacturers started to make up for the formidable diminution in raw-steel production caused by the loss of the northern and eastern regions. Long-neglected coal and iron deposits were utilized. Mines in uninvaded departments, from the Pyrenees to the Pas-de-Calais, were developed to the limit of production. Coke-ovens were set up. A new system of transportation was organ-

ized, and the rolling-stock found somewhere. Plants that had never competed with the north in raw steel were equipped with blast-furnaces and converters. Labor-recruiting agents scoured Italy, Spain, and North Africa. New methods and new machinery were devised so that women could be used as manual laborers. No foundry or machine-shop was too small to be overlooked in the inventory of shell-producing possibilities. Factories got their steel and expert instructors. In quantities ranging from ten to a thousand per day, 75-cm. shells were turned out. In April, 1915, the French armies were receiving nearly a million shells a week for the precious *soixante-quinze*.

This was only the beginning. The *soixante-quinze* cannon had to be replaced and increased in number. Trench warfare called for heavier cannon and shells. Larger shells cannot be manufactured, like the 75-cm., from cut-steel bars turned and drilled on lathes. They must be forged. This required new installation of machinery in factories, and an enormous increase

in consumption of raw material. Since tempered steel in sufficient quantity could not be furnished, the big shells had to be cast in foundries.

The ingenious makeshifts applied to shell production, however, did not work when it was a question of cannon. Fortunately for France, the navy had not followed the example of the army in manufacturing its own equipment. Fortunately, too, the old law which forbade French industry to accept foreign orders and to export war material was repealed in 1885. For thirty years the big establishments of central France—Le Creusot, Montluçon, St.-Chamond, St.-Etienne, and Firminy—had been working for the French navy, and for the armies and navies of a dozen foreign countries. They were equipped with open-hearth furnaces, and produced fine steel in ingots. In competition with Vickers and Krupp, their export business had demanded the most delicate and powerful steel products. The resources and capacity of these plants, constantly increased during the war under the stimulus of danger, saved France and her allies from defeat.

By the time we Americans made up our minds to enter the war, French industry was in a position to give us, also, the artillery without which our armies would have cut a sorry figure at the front.

Throughout the war France received less than 10 per cent. of her artillery and shells from abroad. The exact figures will not be available for a long time yet, but in saying "less than 10 per cent." I am certainly on the safe side.¹ This is an illustration of how French metallurgical industry responded to Monsieur Millerand's appeal at Bordeaux. It should correct the curious impression of many of my compatriots that France's needs were supplied by the United States. One remembers with amusement the campaign of pro-Germans and pacifists in the unhappy days of our neutrality "to stop the war in

¹ The last tables, published in February, 1919, show percentage of increases only as far as the beginning of October, 1916. These are sufficiently eloquent to indicate France's effort in the manufacture of cannon and ammunition. Taking 100 as a basis on August 1, 1914, the Ministry of Armament shows the following stupendous results for the first two years after the meeting at Bordeaux: machine-guns, 16,430; rifles, 29,570; explosives, 3,750; 75-cm. shells, 3,940; other shells of larger caliber, 8,900; 75-cm. cannon, 3,220; heavy cannon, 2,300.

Europe" by an embargo on the export of cannon and ammunition. Up to the day the armistice was signed, France's industrial attitude was that of the little boy who was told by the old gentleman that he could not capture a groundhog by digging in his hole. "Can't catch him? Got to catch him! The family's out of meat," answered the little boy.

In every corner of France, superintendents and engineers and foremen and laborers knew that France was out of meat. But one did not need to go from Paris to find concrete examples of industrial effort. On the banks of the Seine, under the shadow of the Eiffel Tower, were two men who seemed to possess Aladdin's lamp.

At Billancourt, twenty years ago, Louis Renault passed his play hours experimenting with gas-engines in his mother's carriage-house. The old suburban home and the carriage-house are still there. Around them have been built acres of shops to keep pace with the development of Renault's gas-engine. At the outbreak of the war the Renault plant was sending automobiles

all over the world. Louis Renault did not go to the Ministry of War with the proposition of supplying his product. He simply asked what was the need of the moment. He undertook to fill that need. Seventy-five-centimeter shells, of course, came first. There was no hesitation about a radical transformation of his plant for this purpose. When there were enough shells, *aéroplane* motors were in demand. Renault made them. He developed his own models.

After the surprise at Cambrai, in the autumn of 1917, France saw the possibility of the use of small armored tanks. In June, 1918, when the Germans were threatening Paris for the second time, I went out to the Renault factory to speak to the hands. Monsieur Renault was not a bit depressed, and he showed me why. One of his tanks was ready. He ordered it out into the street. It slid down the embankment of the quay to the Seine, climbed up again, went through a hedge, rode over a big tree, and knocked down the walls of a building that was being demolished. Then, turning a half-somer-

sault to shake off bricks and plaster, the tank crawled back to the factory.

"I am making as many of these as I can get the material for," said Monsieur Renault. A month later, the Renault tanks entered into action between the Marne and the Vesle. Ask any American who took part in those glorious July days, and he will tell you what happened.

André Citroën was one of the engineers with special training released from service at the front when public opinion finally realized that the industrial effort of the rear must have technically trained men in the prime of life. Citroën disliked to leave his artillery regiment, but he knew the gravity of the situation and had one idea in his head—shells, shells, and more shells. Shells without limit alone could bring the victory. Unlike Renault, Citroën had no established business with a large plant and thousands of hands. In the summer of 1915, when the Ministry of Armament told him to go ahead and make shells, he possessed only a plot of land on the right bank of the Seine beyond the Pont de Grenelle.

Business enterprises had not prospered along the Quai de Javel. The land was used for growing cabbages and cauliflower. But the quarter was a populous one, and Citroën was looking for labor. He started with one building and a hundred 75-cm. shells a day. Three years later his plant covered acres. He was turning out in Paris over ten thousand shells a day, and directing another large plant, almost as important as the Paris one, at Roanne.

In 1918, nearly five thousand people were working on the cabbage-patch of 1915. When I spoke at the Citroën factory at the time of the last German thrust toward Paris, I lunched in a great hall with the three thousand working-men and working-women of the day shift. We were served by white-garbed girls who brought piping-hot food to the tables in motor-driven wagonettes. Monsieur Citroën has coöperative stores for his hands, and a model *crèche* where hundreds of babies are cared for from Monday morning until Saturday night.

“All this created out of nothing, in the midst

of the war, with the Germans fifty miles away! How did you do it?" I exclaimed.

"Had to," answered Monsieur Citroën.

The metallurgical industry had other burdens than those of munitions and cannon imposed upon it. Rifles were never before manufactured except in arsenals of the state. They were now called for by the million from private industry. Bayonets and trench daggers required tempered steel. The thousandfold increase in aviation and in automobile transport was possible only if steel and iron parts were delivered promptly. Machinery for shops was imported, but most of it had to be made in France. The armies could never get enough barbed wire, picks, shovels, crowbars. As trench warfare developed, light railways for feeding ammunition to the batteries all along the front were needed. Steel-plants had to furnish the rails. Later, heavy artillery could not be handled without wide-gage railways and special trucks. Then came the idea of armored trains and automobiles. At the very time the steel-plants were working to the limit to turn

out heavy artillery, the General Staff realized that the defensive, much less the offensive, could not be successful without machine-guns and armored machine-gun emplacements. Even with labor assured and factories expanding and machines installed to keep pace with the insatiable demands, steel and iron men were not free from the constant fear of running out of raw material and coal. Iron ore, pig-iron, and steel—the figures mounted from month to month like the figures of the budget of the Ministry of Finance. But steel could not be multiplied, like money, by paper and loans.

France imported pig-iron and brought ore from the Pyrenees. Up to the end of 1916 much coal came from England. The intensification of submarine warfare necessitated the recall from their regiments of all the miners. This did not remove the miners from danger. They were put to a greater test than when fighting. Right up to the front lines in Flanders and the Artois, the precious coal-mines were exploited. During 1917 France succeeded in mining thirty million

tons of coal—three fourths of her ante-bellum output! When imports in pig-iron fell off, blast-furnaces in the Gironde, the Loire Inférieure and Normandy, enabled France to increase her production 210 per cent. between July, 1915, and July, 1917. Before the war there was no fire-brick industry in France. All the supply came from Eubœa in Greece. This was cut off entirely. To keep blast and open-hearth furnaces, coke-ovens and converters lined, a new industry was created.

Next in importance to the metallurgical effort of France, and not less difficult to succeed in, was the chemical effort. This was a field in which Germany had excelled in time of peace. Her doctors of philosophy, engaged wholesale by huge industrial enterprises, gave their employers the benefit of tireless and systematic experimental laboratory work. Since the war we have heard much of aniline dyes. The personal experience of each of us has taught the lesson of our dependence upon Germany. Aniline dyes were only one field of superiority. Ger-

man chemical products of every kind competed successfully with French products in French markets. The Ministry of War, in spite of the loss of the iron and coal of the north and east, had something to fall back upon in metallurgy. In chemistry, there was practically nothing to supplement government provisions for manufacturing explosives. It was impossible to divert to the production of explosives the plants that were struggling to meet a tenfold increase of demand for drugs. Other plants were built. And when the Germans started to use asphyxiating gases, an unexplored field of chemical effort was entered upon on a large scale. Observation balloons alone were overtaxing the existing gas-producing capacity of the nation.

But one never finds the French at their wits' end. By a superhuman effort, raw materials were found. Of coal, however, adequate supplies could not be diverted to the chemical factories. The chemical manufacturers concentrated their plants in the departments near the Alps and Pyrenees, and used electricity gener-

ated by water-power. For decades economists and scientists urged the harnessing of mountain watercourses fed by the perennial mountain snow. It required the pressure of the German invasion to secure widespread use of what the French call *houille blanche*.

I am often asked what scene of war made the deepest impression upon me during the ten years I have been following armies. I know that I am expected to speak of a battle, a massacre, an air raid, refugees, or the havoc of destruction. For there is surprise when I answer, "An endless chain of auto-trucks passing by night along the Verdun-Bar-le-Duc road in March, 1916." The Germans had concentrated their artillery and best troops for the final battle of the war. The railway behind the French was destroyed. In spite of the heroism of the defenders of the forts of Verdun, they could not have held back the Germans without food and ammunition. Those auto-trucks saved France from the fate that has finally been meted out to the aggressor. The ammunition they carried enabled the French to

hurl back shell for shell. As I watched them pass toward the thunder and lightning of the valley of the Meuse, I realized that they formed the link between the army of the front and the army of the rear. France was resisting victoriously because her entire population was working night and day. The *Herren Doktoren* had made a false calculation.

A few figures, to illustrate the growth of France's army in the rear, show how wrongly Germany reckoned when she believed that through the violation of Belgian neutrality she was going to strike a mortal blow at France's industrial life:

NUMBER OF WORKERS:

	<i>July</i> <i>1914</i>	<i>Aug.</i> <i>1914</i>	<i>Jan.</i> <i>1918</i>
Food products	93,775	50,469	80,557
Chemical products	78,892	35,470	93,667
Rubber and paper	55,298	17,606	42,506
Textile industries	309,287	104,698	255,227
Clothing	137,764	44,332	109,743
Leather and skins	70,212	26,864	59,375
Wood	84,790	19,315	72,581
Metallurgy	371,300	122,356	642,539

The second column gives the diminution through mobilization. In September, 1914, the figures for textiles and metallurgy were cut in half—if not more—by the invasion of northern and eastern France. The third column was established before the last German offensive. In comparing it with the other two we must remember that only workers in metallurgy and chemical products had been returned to their trades, and that the figures indicate France at work in the fourth year of the war and without her richest industrial provinces.

The textile, leather, and rubber industries supplied the armies with clothing, shoes, and tires. In every department of France, tailors and cobblers, often in little shops, were busy on piece work for the Government. I have lectured in towns of from fifty to eighty thousand inhabitants, all of whose industries were engaged exclusively in army work. The making of automobiles and aëroplanes depended as much upon workers in wood as upon workers in metal. Weaving-mills, also, contributed to the intensive

production of aëroplanes. In July, 1917, after three years of war, fifteen thousand factories were classed as *usines de guerre*. They employed one million, seven hundred thousand hands, of whom only six hundred thousand were mobilized. Four hundred thousand of the civilian hands were women. In factories other than *usines de guerre*, nearly half a million workers were employed.

The president of a chamber of commerce told me shortly before the armistice that French industry, without counting the mobilized soldiers in the *usines de guerre*, was employing more labor than at the outbreak of the war. "When you consider that in making this statement I am comparing the figures of all of France, 'before the war' with those of France, deprived of her richest industrial regions, in the autumn of 1918, you will realize the miracle we have performed and its significance for the future."

Writing about the industrial effort of France during the war has not for its purpose simply to glorify the army of the rear and emphasize a chapter of war history that has escaped notice.

What French manufacturers have done for national defense has wrought a profound change in the internal and international situation of France. Ante-bellum economic conditions will not be reëstablished with peace. The reconstruction of northern France, in industry and agriculture, is no more of a problem than the utilization of the new equipments for manufacturing called into being during the last four years in other parts of France. Capacity for production has increased several-fold. Industrial centers have a labor supply that has kept pace with this increased capacity. Now that the war work is finished, what will these plants produce? Where will they sell their products? Without the aid of a government vitally interested in supplying them, will the flow of raw materials be uninterrupted? When the factories of the North get back to work and the products of Alsace-Lorraine pour into France, there is danger of overproduction at home and keen competition for exporting facilities. France lacks shipping—which means high overseas freights—and fears

meeting the prices of other nations in the world markets. When the armies are demobilized, work must be found for two million artisans and two million unskilled laborers.

French manufacturers and labor leaders do not view the problems of peace and reconstruction from the angle of politicians and journalists. The speeches of our peacemakers and the editorials of newspapers fill with uneasiness those who have actually to confront questions of reconstruction. Although the theories of manufacturers and labor leaders are radically different, they agree in being less interested in preserving France's *amour propre* than in assuring France's *bien-être*. One cannot live on pride. Where patriotism is not tempered by common sense, it is not patriotism at all, but blind and dangerous sentimentality. As for the ideologues, did not Christ tell His disciples to begin spreading the gospel at Jerusalem? A Frenchman, whom we would call in America a captain of industry, said to me recently: "Most of the propositions aired in the press fly in the face of

economic laws. Among Allied statesmen I have found only one who has had the courage to tell people the truth. Pasted over my desk there you see the speech delivered by Sir Eric Geddes at Cambridge on November 28th." I looked at the newspaper clipping. One sentence, underlined with blue pencil, read, "The indemnity question must not be allowed to become a fetish to lead to the ruin of our working classes."

The war lasted too long in Europe for political aspects to dominate at the moment of final settlement. By agreements between statesmen or by the application of force, it is possible to smooth over or cause to disappear political difficulties. The economic situation politicians do not control. The entire population of belligerent countries was called upon to make an industrial effort which changed internal social and economic conditions more than armies changed international political conditions. In making peace, governments have to take into consideration factors which never before appeared in a diplomatic settlement.

Just after the opening of the Peace Conference, a French Cabinet Minister spoke at a manufacturers' banquet. He felt that he had unusually restless and impatient listeners. He asked the reason. The frank question brought forth a frank response. "Mr. Minister," said the toastmaster, "we may be divided about the League of Nations, but we all want a peace that will put Germany down and keep her down. In themselves, your propositions do not displease us. But it is evident that you do not realize the necessity of putting the economic test to each of them. You have not satisfied us that in establishing its program, the members of the Government have asked themselves how, simply and collectively, the measures are going to affect the economic life of France. You did not need to emphasize to an audience of Frenchmen the danger of a renewal of German aggression. But you did need to assure an audience of producers of goods and hirers of labor that the Government, in peace negotiations, is equally alive to the twin dangers of over-production and unemployment.

In order to win the war, you stimulated us to a miraculous industrial effort. In order to win the peace, do not ignore the revolutionized industrial situation of France. The producing capacity of our factories is greatly increased. The field of labor-recruiting is widely extended."

Since the armistice American business men have flocked to France. Eager to help in the economic rehabilitation of the country, they want to provide France with building materials, agricultural machinery, automobiles, locomotives, rolling-stock, and steel rails. They are amazed at the difficulties put in their path, especially since they thought that the French Government would encourage importation. They become angry and declare that the French are blind to their own interests. The inertia of the Government and the Government's fear of lowering the value of the franc abroad are blamed for the strict barriers maintained against importations. The president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Paris has issued a statement criticizing

the French importation regulations, which he attributes to exchange considerations.

The Government's policy, however, has a deeper and more significant cause which has escaped the Americans who are anxious to do business with France. France makes no objection to the importation of raw materials. Machinery that she cannot make herself she is as eager to get as during the war. But all manufactured articles that can be made by French factories are practically prohibited entry. Nor has France shown great willingness to purchase the equipment of the American Expeditionary Force. Is it a mistake in policy to want to keep for France the labor cost and the manufacturing and selling profit of merchandise for French consumption? The real reason why Americans and British are finding business difficult in France is the industrial effort of France during the war.

French captains of industry were not short-sighted during the years of formidable production of war material. In extending their plants

they kept constantly in mind the present crisis. Schneider & Co., for instance, when they were putting up acres of new shops to turn out cannon at Le Creusot and Honfleur, had already decided to become locomotive-manufacturers after the war. The new buildings were constructed accordingly. While André Citroën was developing from hundreds to thousands his daily output of 75-cm. shells, he and his staff did not forget that shells would be a drug on the market after the collapse of Germany. When the armistice was signed, they put into effect the plans they had conceived while they were making shells. The Citroën plants were transformed in a few weeks, and on January 1, 1919, Monsieur Citroën offered to the French public three types of low-priced automobiles. In vain the Ford Motor Company protested by display advertisements against the refusal of the French Government to allow the French market to be flooded with Ford cars. Citroën cannot compete with Ford in cost of production. But even if the French market has to pay a little more and wait

a little longer for deliveries, the manufacturers and war workers who saved France are not going to be without a means of earning a livelihood.

The war has not changed the old system of international trade relations. We are far from the era of free trade between nations and the open door in colonies. Unless reaction goes so far as to cause a revolution, and if economic conditions in other countries are like those in France, we may expect the third decade of the twentieth century to accentuate the tendency to high protective tariffs and to governmental backing of large enterprises in marketing goods in secondary states, protectorates, and colonies. The industrial effort of France during the war made victory possible—but at the price of a commercial war after peace is signed. And if, with peace, the world secures a diminution of armaments, international commercial rivalry will be all the more intense.

While manufacturers are reminding the Government of its increased responsibility toward industry, which involves protection in home

markets and aid in capturing foreign markets, the laboring classes warn the Government of its increased responsibility toward them, which involves radical changes in the conditions and compensation of employment. Employers of labor, they say, have been well rewarded for their effort in the national defense. Here are two examples, taken at random, of profits to shareholders:

CIE. COMMENTRY-FOURCHAMBAULT ET DÉCAZEVILLE

	<i>Francs</i>
1914	3,337,750
1915	7,229,335
1916	10,635,346
1917	20,266,848

SOCIÉTÉ DES ACIÉRIES DU SAUT-DU-TARN

	<i>Francs</i>
1914	1,029,876
1915	1,115,385
1916	6,795,316
1917	15,873,970

Wages increased, but in most cases no more than the cost of living.

So the workers are questioning to-day, with

more boldness and insistence than at any time in the history of French industry, the justice of the present system of the distribution of wealth. They declare that increased taxation to pay for the war must be only at the expense of capital. On the other hand, they demand shorter hours of work and higher pay. If capitalists do not care to continue to manage and develop enterprises under new conditions, they advocate the taking over of industries by the state. A Socialist newspaper expresses the feeling common in France, now that the soldiers are being demobilized, in these words: "While *poilus* were receiving shells, stock-holders were receiving dividends."

All this does not prevent one who has lived in close touch with French industry during the war from being optimistic about the future. The French boil over easily. It is in the Gallic temperament to be extravagant in demands and to press claims with violent words. But it is also in the Gallic temperament to cool down quickly and to let reason win the day. Unless he has

a long time been removed from the soil, the French working-man retains his peasant instinct of respect for property and his peasant ambition of becoming a small capitalist himself. In the country where bureaucracy has been carried to an extreme and where the enterprises controlled by the state are so badly run, the doctrine of state control of industries has little chance of taking deep root. Its loudest advocates would be the most dismayed if they saw it gaining ground. In spite of surface indications, there is a solidarity between employers and working-men. They know that their interests are bound up together, and serious trouble would come only if the captains of industry were to find themselves unable to carry on in time of peace as they have so admirably carried on in time of war.

CHAPTER V

HUMAN CURRENTS OF THE WAR¹

GOING from Menin to Ypres we were nearly half an hour in "no man's land." The name will stick. Human beings could not live there during the war. Human beings will not live there for years after the war. Along the road on the ridge of the hill a few splintered trunks of trees remain. Stumps torn up and turned turtle, sticking in the mud, offer to the wind tendrils of roots instead of branches. The fields, plowed by shells, convulsed by mines, burrowed in all directions by trenches, are pocked. The pocks, often running into one another, are pools of water. By the map we knew that villages had been scattered here and there in this once populous corner of Belgium. Now there were not even traces of buildings. In Ypres

¹ March, 1919.

some walls were standing, but no house had kept its roof. We could not tell where the streets had been.

We passed the French frontier after dark. Suddenly the auto stopped. We got out, fearing engine trouble, and found ourselves in the main street of a deserted city.

"This was Armentières," said our conducting officer. "Before the last German offensive forty thousand people lived here."

Thanks to the moon, we received a ghostly and ghastly impression as we wandered through the streets. We were alone. The ruins did not give up a cat. Owls and lizards had not yet come.

From the Belgian frontier to the Vosges, straight across France, we traveled by one road, and back by another. In the fighting belt, from twenty to sixty miles wide, we went in succession through Armentières, Lens, Douai, Cambrai, Arras, Albert, Bapaume, Péronne, Saint Quentin, Ham, Nesle, Montdidier, Lassigny, Noyon, Soissons, Château-Thierry, Rheims—

why continue the list? Take the map. Look at the names of all the towns and cities in the regions where the armies fought from 1914 to 1918. Draw upon your imagination for the worst that earthquakes and fires could accomplish. And in the portions of northern and northeastern France behind the German lines picture every mine flooded, every factory looted, every farm robbed of live stock and machinery, every cross-roads mined, every railway bridge blown up.

The Battle of Liberation put an end to trench warfare. Each week more cities and regions were freed. Three days after the armistice was signed the last of the invaders had recrossed the frontiers of France. From those who did not know war and the Germans, the bulletins of victory elicited the almost universal comment: "Now, we can breathe freely again. And is n't it fine that the refugees can go home!" The war was over. We could wash our hands of responsibility for the people of the invaded provinces. We did not need to have them on our

minds any longer. Let every one get back to the easy, happy, care-free life of 1914! The Germans are on the other side of the Rhine, and we all did our bit to put them there. By the terms of the treaty of peace we shall tell them to stay there. France has lived her tragic days. We can forget what we have suffered, and enter into the glorious era of the new world.

Most people with a bit of money and their position intact cherish the hope of having the inverse of Rip Van Winkle's experience. With no personal, social, and financial problems to face, or at least unconscious of having any, they expect to wipe the past four years off the slate. It is n't a new world they want, at all. It is the old world—the world of the days before the Germans went amuck. They grow impatient—and angry—when the conversation is led around to social unrest and labor crises. Strikes are the result of Bolshevik propaganda, spread in the interest of Germany. Socialists and labor leaders are unrepentant pro-Germans. With so much reconstruction work to be done, and Ger-

man money to put it through, unemployment is an absurdity. It shows a lack of will to work on the part of the proletariat, combined, perhaps, with governmental inefficiency. The refugee problem no longer exists. Why do not the refugees go back to where they came from?

It is easy enough to say to the million refugees and to the three hundred thousand soldiers of the North who are being released from military service: "Go home now. Your country is freed. We have driven the Germans out." It is easy enough to say to the four million Frenchmen who were in the power of the invaders: "Get back to your work, and resume your normal life. Your country is freed. We have driven the Germans out." Whether they are city folk, town folk or country folk, the problems for demobilized soldiers of the invaded regions, for refugees, for inhabitants, are the same. To begin with, there is not enough food. One prefect told me that in his department the relief commission will have to count on distributing food for a year and a half longer. Until the machin-

ery is replaced there will be no work in mines and factories. The factories, moreover, depend upon the mines and upon raw materials. Coal and raw materials, like food-stuffs, will be insufficient until normal transportation conditions are reëstablished. How can the farmers get along without stock, poultry, seed, fertilizers, implements, wagons, horses? In the destroyed zone there are no homes to go to, no factories to work in, no trades to ply, and the task of rendering fertile again the ground over which the armies fought is dangerous as well as herculean.

But the call of home was strong to some. In spite of the exile of years, many refugees had kept their minds fixed upon the day of victory. They were willing to put up with every hardship and to give themselves without stint to the appalling work of reconstruction. Others were eager to return for the same reasons that had prompted them to leave. When they fled before the Germans, they had felt that the unknown could not be worse or more uncertain than the life they were leading. But they did not make

good in a new place. During the last months of 1918 a stream of northerners homeward bound flowed constantly into Paris. In Paris they stuck. Places on trains were limited, and it required influence or an extraordinary amount of persistence to get a pass from the military authorities. Those who managed to break through official barriers, however, regretted their success. They had gone from places where living was tolerable into conditions worse than those they had become refugees to escape.

In the middle of December a woman from the Aisne came to see me. Her face was aglow. "My husband has just been demobilized. We have a *laissez-passer* for ourselves and for my sister. We shall spend Christmas at home. But our house was looted. I must have sheets and blankets and a few kitchen utensils, perhaps also a stove. With that for a beginning we can get along. I am told that the American Red Cross is helping returning refugees in this way. Would you mind giving me a letter to them?"

A few days later the woman returned. "I thought you would be interested in hearing our experience," she explained. "The American Red Cross in Paris told me that distributions were being made from centers in the liberated departments under the supervision of the local authorities. As our home was twelve miles from Laon, we should make our request there. We went to Laon. At the Red Cross an application form was handed to us. It would have to be passed upon, and we should return in four days. Four days! Had we walked out to our home and tried to sleep there, we should have frozen. There was no place to sleep in Laon. One could not buy in Laon the things we had to have. If we returned to Meaux or Paris to wait the four days, we could not get back to Laon. The military authorities take up the passes. We found a thousand others that day in the same position as ourselves. Most of them renounced going home, as we did. My husband has a place in a pottery at Limoges. We leave to-night. My sister hopes to get into the Paris

tramways. Shall we ever go home? The only thing I did in Laon was to put our house up for sale."

The next morning I read in a Paris newspaper an editorial, signed by a member of the French Academy, about the vital importance of propaganda to encourage and make possible the immediate return of northerners. The Academician pointed out that reconstruction first of all depended upon getting the refugees back home. He insisted especially upon giving every assistance to demobilized soldiers who had not yet taken root elsewhere. He feared for the northern departments the disastrous influence of migratory currents.

One might say that my refugee visitor did not have much pluck, and that she and her husband were discouraged by a comparatively trifling obstacle. If that was the kind of people they were, how would they have met the bigger problems to come, after securing bedding and kitchen utensils? But when one has been bearing a strain—strain of exile, strain of separation from hus-

band, strain of worry about husband, strain of making both ends meet—and bearing it through five years, trifles count for more than big things. It is always that way in life. Governments and relief organizations pay no attention to the peculiar psychology of the human female. In this case the persistent hope of years had curbed the migratory instinct. Home-going was abandoned in a day for lack of a sheet and a saucepan!

Where there is the impulse to go home, much could be done to surround the refugee with strong and sympathetic arms and to aid him in starting anew. Another category of refugees furnishes a more difficult problem. The migratory current has already led to new moorings.

Recently I was being shown the destruction of coal-mine shafts at Béthune. After insisting upon the diabolical plan of the Germans to ruin French industry by depriving the North of its coal, the engineer said to me: "Indemnity, yes; but getting paid for this in money is a small part of our reparation problem. We don't know how

long it will take, how much it will cost, what success will meet our efforts, to restore these mines. Then we have to rebuild not only the dwellings of the miners, but also churches, schools, shops, theaters—whole towns and cities, in fact—so that we can assure the existence and normal life of our workers. Most of this has to be done before they come back.”

“Will they come back?” I asked.

The engineer's face grew grave. I knew why, and did not press for an answer. It was a cold, rainy, gloomy afternoon in March. As we talked we plowed through mud in a country that was unlovely before the Germans came. On a superb March day, just a year ago, I was lecturing at a mining-center at the *Département du Gard*. The superintendent told me that more than a thousand miners from the Pas-de-Calais and several hundred from Belgium were working in his mine. “To increase our output,” he said, “we have invested in new machinery and have doubled the number of our miners. The company has built a lot of new houses. When the

war is over, we shall do our best to hold these people."

Walking along in the bright sunshine, I passed a row of houses among the firs on a beautiful hillside of the Cevennes. It was hard to believe that one was in a coal region. Each house had its little front garden, with a wealth of flowers, and roses climbed trellises against the wall. Yellow-haired children of all ages, playing in the road, indicated the homes of refugees from the North. I stopped to speak to a miner.

"Happy here?" he responded to my leading question. "It would be harder to leave Grand'Combe than it was to leave Béthune three years ago. My children were small then. Now they go to school, and have made their friends. Listen to their Midi accent! My oldest two are working—their first jobs. The boy is a sorter, and the girl has taken up typewriting at the office. We never knew what the sunshine was in the North, and we never had these flowers. My wife and I are homesick occasionally. I don't deny that. But we are better off here than we

have ever been in our lives. Monsieur," and here he grabbed my arm in his earnestness, "I never knew life could be what it is in this place."

The miner from Béthune had discovered in another part of his own country lucrative work under easier living-conditions. His growing family became anchors to hold him in the new surroundings. Had the war ended in 1915—or in 1916—he might not yet have taken root. His case is typical. In every part of France have I found refugees from northern France and Belgium whose exile has turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Nowhere, except in parts of Brittany, did refugees settle in a thickly populated country where they were in competition in the struggle for existence with the indigenous element. Normandy, the Limousine, the Isère, have assimilated easily the influx of refugees in small towns. There has been plenty of work for every one. In ports and large industrial centers jobs were waiting for men and women, boys and girls. It is probable that when war industries have ceased and the French army is com-

pletely demobilized France will experience a period of surplus labor supply. But will the migratory current from the north and northeast be remedied? If refugees could go home to find things as they had left them, yes. But with the problem of reconstruction to face, in the minds of tens of thousands the contras are likely to outweigh the pros.

In the summer of 1914 a Belgian physician arrived at a Normandy watering-place with his wife and three little boys. He had left everything and expected to face hard days. But the mobilization had called away most of the French doctors. There was a chance to practise. For five summers I have known this physician. He has cared for my family. He used to talk about going home. Each summer I have noticed a change in him. His practice has grown marvelously. He goes about in an automobile. His boys are preparing for their "bachos" in a French *lycée*. A year ago his invalid wife died and was buried in France. Last September, when we saw the German line cracking and the Belgian

army advancing toward Brussels, I talked to the doctor of the future of his country. He did not seem greatly interested and turned the conversation to speculation about the changes the war had made in our little corner of Normandy.

And the French physicians whom the Belgian has supplanted? After five years will they be able to return and resume their practice under ante-bellum conditions? The Belgian is a good doctor, a very good doctor, and has won the confidence of the neighborhood. The demobilized physicians will be forced, perhaps, to start anew somewhere else. Even had no refugee come to my summer home, there would have been other Normandy doctors to take the practice of those who were mobilized.

The refugee migratory current is only one factor, and by no means the most important, in starting other migratory currents. At the outbreak of the war France called millions of men from their homes and occupations and has kept them under arms for five years. They have seen a lot and learned a lot. They have gone from

one front to another, from one depot to another, from one hospital to another. Aside from the fighting units, the mobilized workers have almost invariably been sent to factories far from their homes. The services of the rear have taken men in uniform all over France.

More than eighty per cent. of Frenchmen between the ages of fifty and twenty have experienced not only five years of change of occupation, but they have also lived in totally new surroundings. Farm-hands, who would never have been likely to leave their villages, have gone to live in cities. City folk, whose knowledge of the country was limited before the war to Sunday excursions, have lived continuously for years in the open. And while these millions have been away, profound changes have taken place at home. Fathers and mothers and wives have died. Children have grown up. Professions and businesses have passed into the hands of others. Where the same place is waiting for the returning soldier, will he come back the same man, with the inclination and the ability to re-

sume his old work? How many of the eighty per cent. will fit again into former places and former occupations? Do we not have to count on fresh migratory currents started by those who do not fit?

Other migratory currents, different from and not influenced by the refugee and mobilization problems, began in France during the war. The demand for labor in industrial centers became more and more insistent as the war dragged on. Profits of army contractors and manufacturers were limited only by the amount of labor they could command. So they made systematic efforts to recruit labor in agricultural districts, and the exigencies of national defense compelled the government to refrain from discouraging the movement of population to industrial centers. High wages were not the sole consideration to tempt peasants and villagers of both sexes to go to the city. The government put maximum prices on grain and butter and eggs, and controlled traffic in live stock. It is true that in some parts of France agriculture, owing to near-

ness to markets, brought fortunes to peasants. But where transportation was lacking for farm and dairy products, more was to be gained by going to work in munition factories. One could multiply illustrations of this phenomenon. Pamiers, in the Department of Ariège, and Grenoble and other towns in the Department of Isère, are striking examples of the trend from the country to the city as a result of labor-recruiting.

In the first two summers of the war we had an excellent laundress whose husband was killed at the Battle of the Marne. In 1916 the woman announced that she was going to move with her children to Paris. "You ought not to do that," remonstrated my wife. "You can get higher prices and steadier work, but what you gain will be more than offset by higher rent and food. You will coop your children up in one room and be paying more for the room than you do for your little house here." The woman answered: "But in Paris I can get clothes and milk and lots of other things from relief organizations. We

have n't any here." The woman moved to Paris. I saw her the other day. She said she would never go back to Normandy. Relief organizations had been good to her!

A comparison of figures of population of 1914 and 1919 reveals the forces of migratory currents. The population of France has decreased by two millions. Three million men are still mobilized at this writing. And yet the population of Paris has increased nearly a million. Other cities claim the following increases: Lyons, four hundred thousand; Marseilles, three hundred and fifty thousand; Toulouse, two hundred and fifty thousand; Bordeaux, one hundred and fifty thousand, and St. Etienne, Rouen, Limoges, Montpellier, Cette, Nice, Havre, Brest, Nantes, and Grenoble from forty thousand to one hundred thousand each. The figures cannot be checked up until the new census is taken. There are undoubtedly exaggerations. But we cannot be far from wrong if we take these cities and a dozen other centers in estimating that the already depleted agricultural regions of France

have contributed to the cities at least three million new inhabitants. What will be lost by returning refugees is likely to be counterbalanced by the marked determination of hundreds of thousands of demobilized soldiers to settle in large centers. Theaters, cafés, cinemas, paved streets, lights, tramways—the excitement, the warmth, the joy of herding together—are powerful influences. Eve's taste of the apple was not more irrevocable for mankind than the taste of city life for these people. Few who have lived in a city want to go to the country without having in their pocket the money for a return ticket.

Ever since the armistice the influence of migratory currents has been felt in the Chamber of Deputies and in the attitude of public opinion toward peace.

The sufferers by the German invasion were hostile to indemnities in kind. They opposed indemnity bills which provided for the spending of the money, by those who received it, in restoring what the Germans destroyed. The inhabitants of the North were determined not to

have a string attached to the reimbursements for their losses. The claims, their representatives in the Chamber said, were personal claims. They did not want indemnities regarded in the light of reconstructing purely and simply villages and factories and farms. In the changed economic order potent reasons may develop to militate against the reconstruction of cities on the same sites or on the same scale. It was urged that beneficiaries, therefore, must have full liberty to dispose of the sums turned over to them as they see fit.

As regards peace, there was more disposition in the early days of 1919 than in the first two years of the war to sponsor terms which the French believe will contribute to stimulate the industrial and economic life of France. Agricultural questions were put in the background. The French want France to become what she has never before been, a great exporter of manufactured products, with opportunities to compete in the world markets on equal terms with other nations. The deputies and news-

papers and chambers of commerce of a dozen departments, regarded as agricultural before the war, supported colonial development and expansion, clamored for a large merchant marine, championed a big navy program. What some foreign observers called chauvinism and imperialism, born of victory in the war, was really the result of the creation of industries in all parts of France to replace those of the North. It is true that in many regions the French fear the effect of the war upon foreign markets for luxuries, especially for wines. But is not the principal cause the unwillingness of those who have settled in cities to face the necessity of returning to the land?

This seems to be proved by the paradox of virtually unanimous support for what has been termed the reactionary attitude of the French Government toward peace at a time when Socialism is making rapid progress in France. The Socialist deputies in the Chamber and the Socialist newspapers, true to their faith, advocated a peace of reconciliation, and were enthusiastic

about the Wilsonian theories. But the French proletariat has been imbued with the same feeling, during peace negotiations, that led the German proletariat to support the Hohenzollern government during the war—the feeling that the well-being of working-classes depends in a large measure upon ability to export under the most favorable conditions. Refugees and soldiers have carried their doctrines into parts of France hitherto unaffected by Socialist political propaganda. In the next French elections, we shall see Socialist candidates gaining ground in districts where up to now the Socialists polled very few votes. But this does not mean that they will secure more seats. Quite the opposite is likely to happen this year. Public opinion is behind Monsieur Clemenceau and his coadjutors. But the seed will have been sown for a sweeping movement to the Left later.

Another symptom of the new spirit created by migratory currents is the changed attitude of the French toward emigration. The aid France received from African and Asiatic colonials was

not greater on the front than in the rear. Kabyles from southern Algeria swept the streets and collected the garbage of Paris. There was a large influx of population to munition centers and ports from Senegal, the Sudan, Algeria, Tunis, Morocco, Madagascar and Indo-China. Brest, Nantes, Bordeaux, Marseilles, Lyons, became the world's meeting-places. French employment agents scoured Spain and Italy. Refugees from Serbia were received cordially. All over France one finds farms worked by German prisoners, and garrisons and detachments of English, Americans, Belgians, Russians, Canadians, South Africans, Australians, Portuguese, Poles, Czecho-Slovaks, Armenians, Syrians, and Annamites. Even the friendliest of tourists used to feel instinctively the xenophobia of the French provinces. Hostility to strangers has given way to a welcome for all. Spaniards and Italians have already bought farms and settled down. In some agricultural regions I have noticed an Italianization similar to that of parts of New England.

The French realize their weakness to-day, and the fearful handicap for the future, due to depopulation. A great increase in natality, even if it could be counted upon, would not remedy this situation for many years. The colonial and foreign elements introduced into the country during the war will be needed after the war. Other parts of France than the North have suffered nearly as much from internal migratory currents as from the death toll of the war. It must not be forgotten, also, that there were several hundred thousand Germans and Austro-Hungarians in France before the war whose business ability and energy contributed to the prosperity of France. And the return of Alsace-Lorraine threatens to create a migratory current viewed with anxiety by thoughtful Frenchmen. The German element is being expelled from the regained provinces. A propaganda is on foot, which will have to meet with success if France is to hold what she has taken back, to turn eastward again the emigrants who left Alsace-Lorraine after 1871 out of loyalty to France. This

may lead to ruin for some places in France. The thriving textile town of Elbeuf, on the Seine between Rouen and Havre, is an example. Its working population is composed of Alsatians. If the Alsatians leave towns like Elbeuf, the migratory current will spell disaster in the same way as the revocation of the Edict of Nantes did under Louis XIV.

Consequently, the French cannot afford to look with disfavor upon the settlement of soldiers and other foreigners in France. Most of all, they place their hopes in the Americans. My friends say, "We need your blood and energy. We need your ideas. We have lost so many of our own youth that there are splendid openings for young Americans. And they can marry well here." The Frenchman who talks this way has no doubt that his country is the best in the world and he is sure of the attraction to the foreigner of his superior civilization. He is encouraged by the marriage of some French girls to English and American soldiers, who have announced their intention of remaining in France. But he does

not realize that for the Englishman as well as for the American the new worlds, mostly under the rule of Anglo-Saxondom, furnish opportunities for youth far greater than France and without the handicaps of crushing taxation and obligatory military service.

Will not Franco-American marriages mean a loss instead of a gain to France? I have met many American officers and soldiers who have married or intend to marry here. But not one of them has told me that he is going to settle in France! There are stories in the French press of two hundred thousand Americans remaining here after the demobilization. The wish is father to the thought. While French *intellectuals* nourish the hope of new blood in France, our presence here is awakening the impulse to emigrate to America that the French have never before experienced as have the people of more densely populated European countries. The contact with American soldiers is starting a migratory current, yes, but away from France, not toward France. The younger generation of

French soldiers, who fought side by side with the Americans, and the boys in the villages where our soldiers have been encamped, have had the idea instilled into them of America as the land where one is free from long military service, and where one can earn by the labor of his hands triple or quadruple what one could hope to gain by any kind of work in France. The pay of our soldiers was twenty times that of the French soldiers. In the many places where we put up warehouses and laid out ports and railway tracks, the French saw American carpenters earning, with board and lodging thrown in, wages larger than the salary of a city postmaster, a chief of police, a sub-prefect, a judge of the Court of Appeal, or the rector of a university.

The American Expeditionary Forces will leave few stragglers in Europe. Our boys will go home with new and broader vision, but with the idea they brought here confirmed—that the United States is God's country. Migratory currents of American origin, born of our intervention, will take place within the borders of the

United States. Will not army and industrial mobilization have results in America similar to those we have observed in France? The tearing of boys and men away from their homes, and keeping them away for a long period of time, will lead to widespread changes of habitation. The intensification of industries will increase the population of cities and denude agricultural districts. Schemes that have been set forth for putting the soldier on the land are not going to meet with great success. Over against the rare soldier from the city who, having learned to live in the open, does not want to return to his prison, we must put the country soldier to whom constant association with large numbers of men has been a revelation of what life may be. And must we not look for the migratory currents created by war industries to arouse an interest we have never before had in world markets, thus causing us to change radically our foreign policy?

In the wake of the American Expeditionary Forces may come a new migratory current from Europe to America, more formidable than we

have yet had to cope with. The devastation of northern France and a part of Belgium was not unique. Poland, Lithuania, East Prussia, the countries of the Danube and the Balkans, Russia and the Ottoman Empire, have been ravaged. Races are still set one against the other. The financial burdens laid upon every European country are so appalling that there is little difference in the economic situation of victors, vanquished, and neutrals.

The victors are confronted with this dilemma: If they attempt to get their war expenses out of Germany, they will have to continue to keep under arms all of their young manhood. If they do not demobilize soon, they cannot hope for a speedy return of normal economic conditions. Great Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium have to choose between the burden of bearing arms and the burden of paying most of the cost of the war themselves. In either case, a migratory current to escape the inevitable aftermath of war will be started. During the past generation, Germany not only held a rapidly growing popu-

lation, but was a large importer of labor. Italians now find another outlet. If Germany, as a result of the war, finds herself deprived of her sources of wealth—iron and coal and world markets for manufactured products—and saddled to boot with taxation that means economic slavery, millions of Germans will try to emigrate. In spite of the glorious future promised by the Conference of Paris to emancipated races of Austria-Hungary, and Russia, one has the right to be skeptical. We may juggle with frontiers as we will. But we cannot get away from the economic laws that were more powerful than armies and statesmen in forming the political organic units of 1914. Experiments in creating new states are likely to increase rather than diminish emigration from eastern Europe to America.

Congress proposes to prohibit immigration during a period of four years after the signing of peace. Is a blanket measure of this character what we want and what we need? Yes—if we can now dispense with Europe's contribution to our material development. No—if increase of

population by immigration is still helpful to us. It is an error to think that prohibition for a limited time will save us from undesirable elements. After four years the best and most energetic of the new migratory current will have found its way elsewhere. Would it not be wiser to permit immigration but make our regulations more stringent?

We have always handled the problem of entry into the United States stupidly and illogically, annoying to ourselves and to the immigrants. The war has shown us the way, and provided us with the means, of suppressing the absurdity of wholesale detention at Ellis Island. As a war measure we are demanding a passport, with the *visé* of an American consular official, of every person who proposes to put foot on American soil. It is possible to continue this machinery after the war. We can limit the granting of *visés* to desirables. The applicant's desirability can best be determined by investigation on the spot in Europe.

The Parliaments of Great Britain and the

British Dominions are as keenly alive as we are to the necessity of being ready for a strong migratory current from continental Europe. London has gone farther than Washington, and seems inclined to follow a path that will lead to tremendous consequences for Europe. It is proposed at Westminster to forbid enemy aliens to enter British territory for an indefinite period and to deport Germans, Austrians, and Hungarians who are settled in the British Empire. If this proposal is carried out, other nations, notably Brazil, may follow the precedent set by the British. Deportation of Germans from British territory would create a forced migratory current as great as that which is already flowing out of Alsace-Lorraine and Prussian Poland. It is unlikely that the ousted Germans will find it possible to settle in their country of origin. Where will they go, and in what direction will the migratory current from Germany flow? Will public sentiment in America bar Germans and influence Central and South American countries to adopt the same policy? Upon the answer to

these questions depends, in a very large measure, the influence of the war of 1914–1918 upon twentieth-century Europe. Nothing is more certain than that we cannot bottle up, under adverse economic conditions, the eighty million Germans of central Europe in a German state narrowed down to its ethnographical limits. Even if we gave back to Germany her colonies, they would not support a large white population. Do we not have to choose, then, between sharing with the German race the development of Africa, the two Americas, and Australia, and seeing the Germans overflow into eastern Europe and Asia?

In December, 1914, in the office of a great electrical manufacturing concern of Berlin, I was interviewing one of the chief promoters in Germany of *rapprochement* with Great Britain. I had come to get his version of the causes of the war. "Why is Germany fighting?" he cried, jumping up from his desk. "I can put it in one sentence. We were nervous to the breaking-point over the Westward-Ho preparation of the Slavs." In expanding his thesis, the German

explained the war by migratory currents. Russia was pressing Germany. So Germany had to press France and Belgium. Great Britain was afraid she would be pressed in turn. I suppose that if I had met this manufacturer-philosopher again after we had entered the war, he would have explained our intervention in the same way! Some Americans did. Were not we to be attacked next?

Would it be a strange ending for a war caused by German fear of a Slav migratory current westward, to have a German migratory current eastward? Not at all! The greatest wars in Europe were due to migratory currents from the east and north seeking a way out to the Atlantic and Mediterranean. We read that "civilization" was saved every time by the races of the west and south stemming the migratory current. The French claim to-day that they must go back to the Rhine, as they have done in the past, in order to prevent a renewal of German aggression. But the Eastern menace is relative. The Germans have gone eastward to stem the Slav tide.

And at the time of her war with Japan, did not Russia try to gain the sympathies of the world by claiming that her presence in Vladivostok and Port Arthur was essential to save Europe from the yellow peril?

"The world is not changed," says the pessimist with a sigh. "History repeats itself. Human nature is always the same." Platitudes! What is being said over and over again in Paris salons is, I am told, being said just as often on the other side of the Atlantic. Let us put over against them the words of Phillips Brooks, as much gospel truth to-day as when they were spoken a generation ago from a Boston pulpit:

The real question everywhere is whether the world, distracted and confused as everybody sees that it is, is going to be patched up and restored to what it used to be, or whether it is going forward into a quite new and different kind of life, whose exact nature nobody can pretend to foretell, but which is to be distinctly new, unlike the life of any age the world has seen already. It is impossible that the old conditions, so bruised and broken, can ever be repaired and stand just as they stood before.

In the backward and forward movement of migratory currents in Europe, racial elements have been steadily absorbed or united to form increasingly larger political organisms. In the overflow to extra-European countries, new nations have been created. Racial antagonism and intense nationalism are the aftermath of wars only to superficial observers who cannot see farther than the end of their noses, only to opportunist statesmen who mistake passing symptoms for permanent conditions.

A mother once said to me: "I have come to dread the day my babies learn to walk." "Why?" I asked. "Because they can go away from me," she said. The *status quo* is a comfortable condition. But it exists only in infancy and decrepitude. Between the beginning and the end of life, there is the migratory instinct. When this world of ours hears the trumpet of the Angel Gabriel, and not until then, shall we be in a position no longer to reckon with evolution.

CHAPTER VI

THE ATTITUDE OF FRANCE TOWARD PEACE ¹

DURING the first month of its activities the Peace Conference showed unanimity only in the choice of Premier Clemenceau for president. This was more than a personal tribute to the man who led France to victory. It was the recognition on the part of the Allied nations, great and small, of the unique claim of France to first consideration in the solution of the problems of peace. Proportionately as well as actually, France is the power which has made the greatest sacrifices in blood and treasure. From the first days of the war the fighting was largely on French soil. In her hour of triumph France faces economic disaster through the ruin of her richest industrial and mining regions. Of all

¹ April, 1919.

the warring nations, France could afford least the terrible toll in young manhood.

The Peace Conference has brought to Paris a host of journalists from Anglo-Saxon countries. Few of them have been in Paris before, and there is a tendency among them to pass hasty judgment upon the attitude of France toward peace. If what they write finds general acceptance in the British Empire and the United States, the effect will be deplorable. The more background one has—background of intimate association with the French before and during the war—the more one hesitates to attempt an analysis of France's state of mind in the hour of victory. But the analysis must be made in order to counteract the impression which is going abroad that the French people are hostile to the construction of a new world on the basis of what is coming to be known in peace-conference circles as "the American point of view."

Imperialistic and chauvinistic elements are at work in France, as in all other countries, to make an old-fashioned peace in which the spoils will be

to the victors. Reactionary influences are more apparent among the French than among the British and Americans. They seem to possess more power. They have wider and franker newspaper support. And one finds very few Frenchmen who are willing to champion without reservations President Wilson's program for peace.

Seeing these surface indications, many who have come to report the Peace Conference are filled with amazement and disgust. They are impatient with the French for not falling into line immediately with the American program. I am sorry to find so little inclination to try to get a sympathetic understanding of the French attitude, so little effort to study the problems confronting France, and to appreciate their complexity and intricacy.

And yet it is not difficult to explain the distrust, if not actual antagonism, of the French, in the opening days of the Peace Conference, to our idealistic program. In the first place, French mentality is different from ours. The French

are less given than we to generalizations, and they do not have the Anglo-Saxon ability of self-deception. If the French are less sure of the infallibility of their judgments, it is not because they are more cynical than we, but because they are less naïve. In the second place, France views the present situation and the peace settlement from a European-Continental point of view. America and most of the British Dominions have oceans between them and Europe. Great Britain is an island world power whose interests are largely extra-European. Since the German Navy has disappeared and the path to India is no longer menaced, Mr. Lloyd George and his associates have changed their attitude toward Mr. Wilson. The entire Anglo-Saxon world is able to view the actual and future state of central and eastern Europe with an equanimity and a detachment that no Frenchman can feel.

From sheltered positions across the seas and on an island that has not been invaded for eight hundred years, we Anglo-Saxons of Great Brit-

ain, the United States, and the Dominions, could go to the Peace Conference with splendid ideas of world reconstruction, and could call upon the nations of the world to deliberate first of all upon the society of nations, with the disposition of Germany's colonial empire as the initial practical test of our plan. And at the same time we could calmly proceed with the rapid demobilization of our armed forces. But we should not have been surprised or aggrieved when Monsieur Clemenceau and his associates (and the French press and nation behind them) demurred. The French delegates demanded that the Peace Conference put at the head of its program the imposition of terms of peace on Germany and the re-establishment of order in Russia.

The entire French nation has been under arms for four and a half years. Northern France is in a lamentable state. There is economic chaos in Belgium, which threatens the stability of the Government. Germany remains strong enough to render imprudent the demobilization of the French Army. Bolshevism is spreading west-

ward. If the Entente nations continue to keep millions under arms, and do not soon begin to center their thought and effort upon industry and commerce, serious social unrest is bound to appear. From a world point of view the French may not be logical in asking the Peace Conference to decide first of all the details of the settlement with Germany, and to assume immediately international responsibility for restoring order in Russia; but from the French point of view, is any other course open to Monsieur Clemenceau and his associates?

One may say without hesitation, also, that the weakness and irresolution shown in the first sessions of the Peace Conference have not reassured the French regarding the possibility of creating on the spot the society of nations. By consenting to the formation of a close corporation, with several other statesmen to run the conference, Mr. Wilson has revealed the inconsistency between his words and his actions. The initial plenary meeting of the conference was perfunctory and colorless. The second plenary meeting

ended in vehement protests from the representatives of the small nations, in which Premier Borden of Canada joined, against the intention of the five great powers to dictate the principles of representation and the methods of procedure.

From the beginning it became evident that Great Britain, the United States, France, Italy, and Japan had decided to make the important decisions in secret sessions, to which representatives of the other states would be invited only in a consultative capacity when problems affecting their particular interests were involved. China, with her four hundred millions, is a "secondary state." The eighty million Germans of central Europe, and over two hundred million Russians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Egyptians, whose interests in the decisions of the Peace Conference are most vitally affected, are not represented at all. The advice of neutral states concerning the organization of the world league, which they will be supposed to join, is not asked.

Is it any wonder that the French, however

sympathetic with the idea of a society of nations, have little immediate interest in high-sounding phrases when they feel themselves on the edge of a volcano? Put yourself in the Frenchman's place. In one column of his morning newspaper he reads that Lille, four months after the armistice, is still without food and coal and adequate transportation for the renewal of her industrial life. The next column informs him that Premier Clemenceau is presiding over meetings where Japan and China quarrel about Kiao-chau, and Australia puts forth claims to Samoa. The official bulletin of the Peace Conference announces vaguely that the future of Germany's African colonies is being discussed, but no step has been taken to establish peace between France and Germany, and the conference has postponed action on the Russian question, pending the improbable acceptance of its invitation by the Bolshevists and other factions to a meeting in the Sea of Marmora. As for Poland, whose army of less than a hundred thousand is facing disaster through lack of ammunition and

reinforcements, the five big powers have sent a commission to Warsaw to find out what is already known in every newspaper office in Paris. And the Turks keep on merrily massacring the remnant of the Armenians. This is the situation in February, 1919.

Without impugning the advisability or possibility of establishing a durable world peace through the adoption of "the American program," public opinion in France asks that questions be discussed and decisions made in the following order: (1) settlement with Germany and suppression of Bolshevism; (2) creation of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia; (3) Danubian, Adriatic, and Balkan settlements; (4) Baltic and Russian settlements; (5) liquidation of the Ottoman Empire; (6) Asiatic and African problems; (7) general world questions, including the society of nations.

There are wide differences of opinion about how these questions should be solved, but as far as I have been able to ascertain from intimate contact with all classes in France, there is una-

nimity in regard to order of solution. I find doubt only in regard to the order of (6) and (7). Many Frenchmen are willing to admit that decisions regarding Asiatic and African problems ought to follow the formation of the society of nations, but all include the Ottoman Empire within the sphere of the general European settlement which must precede the society of nations.

If you point out to your French friends the American belief that the solution of all debatable questions would be different, easier to reach, more satisfactory to those interested, more in accordance with justice, more permanent, if we already have our society of nations as a working international organism, they will agree with you. They will say that you are logical, and that President Wilson is voicing their hearts' desire; but they add that security is France's immediate and pressing need, and that after the experiences of the last generation no Frenchman would consent to subordinate practical and necessary measures of security to theories that might not work out. Is the French attitude unreasonable? Why in-

terpret it as hostility to the American program? The Frenchman says, "Safety first."

In the French mind, the suppression of Bolshevism must be undertaken by the Allied nations coincident with the imposition of terms of peace upon Germany. For if we conclude peace with Germany while a state of anarchy is raging in eastern Europe, Germany will still have an opportunity to come out of the war victorious. The French are more afraid now than they were during the war of the German plan to subjugate economically, if not politically, eastern Europe. A strong Poland, and the former Baltic Provinces wholly free from German influence, are regarded by Frenchmen as vital necessities for safeguarding the future of their own country. Bolshevism has already penetrated the Baltic Provinces and menaces Poland. As it seems likely that the dissolution of the Hapsburg Empire will bring about the union of the German portions of Austria with Germany, the French cannot conceive of security for themselves in any other way than by having something substantial

in the East to replace the Russian alliance. No Frenchman forgets that France after the war, even with Alsace-Lorraine, will have to face a Germany twice as large in population as France, and probably more closely knit together than under the Hohenzollerns. France feels, therefore, that she cannot rely solely upon the guaranties afforded her by the projected society of nations against the possibility of a renewal of German aggression.

It is with these considerations in mind that we must interpret the speeches of Monsieur Pichon and Monsieur Clemenceau to the Chamber of Deputies just before the opening of the Peace Conference. The members of the American commission to negotiate peace and the journalists who accompanied them to Paris were dismayed at the "old-fashioned" ideas of Monsieur Pichon, which seemed to indicate that nothing was changed in the aims and methods of European diplomacy. They were aghast when they contrasted the statements of Premier Clemenceau and President Wilson, made on the same day.

Premier Clemenceau told the Chamber of Deputies that he was still a partizan of "the balance of power," and that if the nations banded against Germany had been allies in 1914, Germany would not have dared to attack France. He admitted frankly that he could not discuss with the Chamber the Government's ideas about terms of peace, because he had a maximum and a minimum program, and was going into the Peace Conference to get for France all he could. At the same moment President Wilson, speaking in England, declared that "the balance of power" was an exploded theory, that the United States would enter into no alliance which was not an alliance of all nations, and that the creation of a new world required new methods.

The apparent irreconcilability between the French and American points of view need not discourage us, for the French Premier and the American President based their conclusions upon different premises. Premier Clemenceau was thinking of the particular interests of France at the present moment. President Wilson was

thinking of the general interests of mankind in the future. Once we are able to give France definite and tangible assurances of speedy economic rehabilitation and genuine security against the renewal of German aggression, we shall find Premier Clemenceau and every other Frenchman sympathetic and enthusiastic in championship of the American program for a durable world peace.

We have not the monopoly of liberalism and idealism. There is nothing new in President Wilson's "fourteen points and subsequent discourses." One finds in the writings of a dozen Europeans, including several Frenchmen, everything that President Wilson has said about methods for establishing universal peace. Men as different in character and environment and epoch as Sully and Kant have dreamed of the society of nations, as Grotius and Czar Nicholas II have proposed to substitute arbitration for war, as St. Paul and Karl Marx have proclaimed the gospel of internationalism. What Americans are talking about at the Hôtel Crillon to-day was dis-

cussed in much the same manner in the same city by the Jacobins.

From the windows of the Hôtel Crillon our earnest Americans look out upon the spot where were enacted the scenes that drowned in blood the fair hopes of the equally earnest Jacobins. Just across the Seine, also within view of the guillotine emplacements, President Wilson is advancing his program in the closed sessions of the "Big Five." While he speaks, soldiers of the army of which he is the commander-in-chief are being shot down in northern Russia by men who sincerely believe they are fighting in defense of the principles President Wilson is declaring. And Czecho-Slovaks and Poles and Ukrainians are executing the American program for peace by cutting one another's throats in Silesia and Galicia. Invoking Wilson's "fourteen points," the Jugo-Slavs are feverishly drilling and equipping an army to fall upon the Italians.

The American commission to negotiate peace has to learn how to work in the Old World atmosphere. We Americans are temperamentally im-

patient. We think quickly and comprehensively. The spell of the goal is upon us. It has frequently occurred in our fighting over here that an American regiment would push forward to capture a position regardless of the enemy on the right and left. Success has sometimes met efforts of this kind. On other occasions rashness and superabundance of confidence have led us into a bad hole. In our fight for the right sort of a peace the risk of failure is in following these tactics.

At heart very few people in the Allied countries are out of sympathy with the American program for peace, which none denies is the best program proposed for the solution of the problems confronting the conference of Paris; but we risk compromising the success of our cause by failing to appreciate, as our Allies appreciate them, the obstacles to be faced and overcome. Reactionary and imperialistic forces are deep-rooted and tenacious, but we have the reasonable hope of winning and keeping the support of European public opinion if we view with tolerance

and treat with consideration the traditional currents of European thought. But if, inspired by particular interests or by past experience, we try to ride roughshod over the objections raised to the application of our principles, we shall run into machine-gun fire on our flanks and behind us.

Misunderstandings and fruitless controversy can be avoided by adapting ourselves to Old World methods of approaching problems. Let us refuse to see evidences of megalomania and imperialism in the demands of the French delegates, and let us examine and weigh and discuss the French propositions from the point of view of loyal friends of France, whose first thought is to establish a peace that will rehabilitate France and safeguard France in the future. When we are sure that we understand the attitude of the French people toward peace, then we are ready to see if we cannot reconcile our world program with the real interests of our ally.

The demands of France against Germany and her allies were outlined in the first year of the war

as follows: (1) punishment of those responsible for the war; (2) reparation for losses during the war; (3) guaranties against future aggression on the part of Germany and her allies. In addition to these war aims, French statesmen consistently announced the determination of France to support similar demands by France's allies, and to sign no treaty of peace which did not emancipate the nationalities subject to the enemies of France. In the course of the war the French Government entered into agreements with several of the Allies, justified as war measures that seemed necessary in order to bring the war to a successful conclusion. After the Russian Revolution the French Government promised the people to safeguard French investments in Russia. In the preliminary discussions with President Wilson and in the opening sessions of the Peace Conference, Premier Clemenceau declared the willingness of France to adopt the American program in its entirety, including the society of nations; but he made it clear that this willingness should not be construed as the abandonment of

the threefold program, *sanctions, réparations, sécurités*. Nor could France go back upon her signature to treaties and her promise to her own people concerning Russian investments.

The question of punishments is more sentimental than practical. Although there is in France a strong feeling that steps should be taken to bring before the bar of world justice the responsible authors of the war and those who were guilty of crimes against international law during the war, France has no peculiar or intractable attitude on this question. The Peace Conference has appointed a commission to look into the advisability and possibility of punishments, and the French will accept its decisions, whatever they may be.

France is not involved alone in the secret treaties. Great Britain was a signatory to the agreement with Italy, and the other agreements are between France and Great Britain. If some acceptable way out can be found, France will gladly forego the execution of these treaties.

The emancipation of subject nationalities is

unanimously adopted by all the nations represented at the Conference of Paris, and the status of the emancipated races, with the exception of Syria and Armenia, will be determined without France advancing special claims and interests.

French investments in Russia amount to more than twenty-two billion francs, but France will be willing to agree to whatever decision the Peace Conference may take on this subject.

There remain the two questions of reparations and guaranties. In the solution of these one finds all the difficulties that are likely to arise between France and other nations, especially between France and the United States, at the Peace Conference.

France views the question of reparations as one which is vital to the very existence of the nation. Shortly before the armistice Premier Clemenceau stated that France would exact from Germany payment of the bill of damages to the last cent. When the Entente powers, by the memorandum of Versailles, announced to President Wilson their willingness to receive an offer

of armistice from Germany, and to treat for peace on the basis of President Wilson's "fourteen points and subsequent discourses," there was a specific statement about reparations. The French claim that Germany, when she solicited the armistice, accepted this important reservation in the application of the "fourteen points and subsequent discourses."

If you say to a Frenchman, "The Entente powers and the United States have assumed before the world the obligation of making peace along lines of strict conformity in every detail to the principles we have agreed upon," he will answer, "Yes, but only in so far as the application of the principles does not prevent our collecting the bill of damages Germany must pay us." The French cannot admit that, after the sacrifices they consented to make up to the day of victory, France should come out of the Peace Conference impoverished and unable to hold her own economically against a united and still rich post-bellum Germany. The danger of a Pyrrhic victory is real to them, and they believe that France

is not called upon to waive her claims for reparations, or accept uncertain security for the payment of her bill of damages, in order to make easier the formation of the society of nations.

How is France to receive adequate compensation from Germany? When the amount Germany owes France is fixed by the commission on reparations recently appointed by the Peace Conference, are the French delegates justified in accepting simply a blanket assurance from the society of nations that Germany will pay fully and promptly the amounts assessed? A creditor has a right to pass upon the nature of the securities and to safeguard amply his interests. Germany does not possess sufficient wealth to compensate France for the injuries done to France during the war, and the French point out that much of the destruction wrought in northern France has been the carrying out of a deliberate plan to ruin France industrially, and to render her for the next generation, even though victorious on the field of battle, inferior to Germany in international industrial competition. If France

asks for a Lorraine frontier farther north than that of 1870, for the acquisition of some of Germany's colonies, for a favored position in Syria, and for the creation of a special régime in regard to the German provinces on the left bank of the Rhine, she bases her claims on the ground of reparations. "We are not imperialistic, nor are we affected with megalomania," declare the French. "We want to have in our own hands the means of compensating ourselves for the losses incurred in the war. If we do not have these securities, the existence of France will be jeopardized."

This is France's attitude toward peace in so far as reparations are concerned. We may think that France's interests will be safeguarded and that France can be assured of equality with Germany in post-bellum industrial competition without annexation of German territory, without a special régime for the left bank of the Rhine, and without increasing her colonial domain; but is not the burden of proof on us? If we refuse to agree to the French program for reparations,

must we not be in a position to offer France a satisfactory and certain alternative?

Now for France's attitude toward peace in so far as guaranties against a renewal of German aggression are concerned. Last summer, when the issue of the war was still in doubt, I was lecturing to the recruits of the class of 1919 in a Brittany garrison town. I had the honor of being accompanied by the general commanding the region. He told me that he always impressed upon the drill officers the necessity of instructing the boys in more than methods of fighting.

"We French," he explained, "are extremely individualistic. The sacrifices we are making in this war are not blind sacrifices. When we fight, we want to know not only how to fight, but why we fight. I shall give you an illustration."

We were standing in the middle of a hollow square. The general looked out over the eager young faces, and told the captain of the company to call a boy from the ranks. The soldier came up and saluted.

"My little one," said the general, "how many times in a hundred years has Germany invaded France?"

"Eighteen-fourteen, eighteen-fifteen, eighteen-seventy, nineteen-fourteen, my general," answered the recruit.

As he looks to the decisions of the Peace Conference, these four invasions are present in the mind of every Frenchman. And coupled with 1814, 1815, 1870, 1914 is the fact the Frenchmen cannot escape from even in the hour of victory: there are in Europe fewer than forty million French and more than eighty million Germans. "The very reason why the society of nations will mean the salvation of France," argues the American or Britisher. But the Frenchman, while not refusing to admit the possibility of a solution through the creation of a universal league of nations, has too much at stake to put all his hopes in the reign of peace on earth and good will among men. He has lived under the shadow of the German menace all his life, and his narrowest escape from being crushed under the iron heel

occurred only a few months ago. So he says: "The Rhine must be, as it was before the nineteenth century, the military frontier between the French and the Germans. Denmark must have back her Danes. The Slavs and their lands must be freed absolutely from German domination. Otherwise, we have lost the war." We may think that France can be made secure from German aggression by some other means than by neutralizing the left bank of the Rhine and by despoiling Germany of large portions of what she has come to consider through centuries her own lands in the East; but is not the burden of proof on us? If we refuse to agree to the French program for guaranties, must we not be in a position to offer France a satisfactory alternative?

Thus it is that we Americans, apostles of the new order and convinced that we have found a remedy for the world's ills, must turn from our general principles to concrete problems, from theories to conditions. If we do not do this, we bid fair to arrive at exactly the opposite result

from that for which we are striving. Missionaries of peace, we may engender fresh strife. Champions of internationalism in the best sense of that word, we may intensify nationalism. John Calvin, revolting from dogmas, created new dogmas. Martin Luther, inspired with the idea of strengthening religious faith, undermined it. We talk of making a "clean sweep," and think that the way to do it is in one great movement; but I can remember my mother telling a green servant to get at the corners first, and not to go forward until she was sure that everything was clean behind her. At the Peace Conference, until we have given careful and sympathetic attention to the traditional and instinctive states of mind of the peoples whose destinies we are attempting to determine, we shall make little progress toward a workable society of nations. In the meetings of the "Big Five" President Wilson may be able to wrest concessions, and the smaller nations may acquiesce; but read carefully the official bulletins, and you will notice the qualifying adjective "provisional" or the qualify-

ing phrase "in principle." Let us not deceive ourselves!

France presents at the Peace Conference the following maximum demands:

(1) The return of Alsace-Lorraine, in the limits of 1870, without conditions.

(2) Germany will agree to pay, in whatever manner may be specified, the amount of France's claims for reparations, as awarded to France by the commission appointed for that purpose by the Peace Conference.

(3) German property, public and private, in Alsace-Lorraine is to be liquidated by the French authorities, and regarded as a payment on the account of the war indemnity. The proprietors dispossessed will become the creditors of their own Government.

(4) Germany shall replace in kind, as far as practicable, the machinery, raw materials, farm implements, live stock, and whatever else was destroyed in or stolen from northern France or requisitioned by the invading armies; locomotives and rolling-stock seized; the deficit of coal France

may have to claim over what the Sarre Valley produces; and French shipping sunk by the submarines during the war.

(5) France shall have a share of the German Navy proportionate to her losses and her co-operation on the sea.

(6) The cession to France of the coal basins in the Sarre Valley, the new frontier line not to be that of 1814, but to be drawn in such a manner as to include all the coal-deposits. An estimate will be made as to the value of the coal in this region, and put on the other side of the ledger against the losses France has suffered through the occupation by Germany of the coal regions of northern France.

(7) The economic union with France, and administration by France, in coöperation with Belgium, of the remaining German territory on the left bank of the Rhine until Germany's debt to France and Belgium is paid. When this is accomplished, the inhabitants of these provinces are to be given the opportunity by plebiscite to decide whether they wish to remain in economic

(and possibly political) connection with France and Belgium, or to return to their former status in the German Confederation.

(8) The permanent military neutralization of German territory on the left bank of the Rhine. After the French and Belgian claims for reparations are satisfied, France and Belgium will withdraw their armies. Whatever decision the inhabitants may then make in regard to their economic and political status, Germany, France, and Belgium bind themselves not to raise or introduce armed forces into these provinces.

(9) As much of Schleswig as expresses its desire to do so by plebiscite must be ceded to Denmark.

(10) The creation of a strong and united Poland within its ethnographical limits, but possessing, in addition, the port of Dantzic and a hinterland extending back to purely Polish territory.

(11) Czecho-Slovakia and Lithuania will receive from Germany and Austria all the territories in which they possess a majority of the

inhabitants or which are necessary for their independent economic existence.

(12) Germany shall cede to France whatever portions of her African colonies France asks for, after agreement with Great Britain, Belgium, and Portugal, and renounce the advantages guaranteed her in Morocco by the agreements of 1906 and 1911.

(13) France is to be the mandatary of the powers in the organization and control of Syria, the boundaries of the said state to be determined by the Peace Conference.

(14) Ample guaranties are to be given to France for the integral repayment of money loaned by the French Government and French subjects to Russia, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, and for the protection of equitable liquidation of French concessions and business enterprises in these countries.

The "fourteen points" of France are not set forth by Premier Clemenceau and Foreign Secretary Pichon in opposition to President Wilson's "fourteen points." Monsieur Clemenceau

and Monsieur Pichon are lawyers representing before the bar of world justice the interests of their client. They have both stated frankly that their first duty as advocates of France in the Peace Conference is to secure for France reparations and compensations for what she has suffered, and guaranties against the recurrence of the danger.

During the first month of the conference Monsieur Clemenceau said that he had sacrificed many of his personal ideas and prejudices, and had refrained from insisting upon certain things that he, as representative of France, thought France ought to have. Monsieur Pichon is the spokesman of the Quai d'Orsay, and, willy-nilly, he is compelled to set forth and defend the traditional point of view of French foreign policy in every disputed question. Just as in the case of England, France has a foreign policy the roots of which were planted before Columbus discovered America, and which has developed along its original lines for five centuries. Dynasties and governments have changed in France, but not the

Quai d'Orsay. France has experienced invasion and defeat, but the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have gone back to their *dossiers* to take them up again without destroying or altering a single document therein.

So we cannot dismiss with a wave of the hand France's "fourteen points" on the ground that they conflict with America's "fourteen points," which France promised to adopt as the basis of peace. We have to convince Monsieur Clemenceau that his client's interests are not jeopardized by giving up any of the French claims. We have to convince Monsieur Pichon that America has found a better foreign policy *for France* than the traditional one of the Quai d'Orsay. This is not an easy task for us in either case, but especially in the second. We think in decades; France thinks in centuries. We have no past experiences or present problems analogous to those of France. I shall have to limit myself to two illustrations.

The left bank of the Rhine. We say that Europe became an armed camp in the second

half of the nineteenth century owing to annexations, or attempted annexations, contrary to the will of the inhabitants, and ask France to consider her own bitter experience of Alsace-Lorraine. The French answer that when the Rhine was the boundary between France and Germany, France was able to defend herself, and give you examples from Julius Cæsar to Louis XIV. They point out that only since Prussia installed herself on the left bank of the Rhine has France been at the mercy of the Germans.

France in Syria. We say that the liberation of subject races should not be taken as the occasion for a further extension of the doctrine of European eminent domain, which has proved to be the underlying cause of nineteenth-century wars. The French answer that Syria has been intimately associated with France since the Crusades, and that if there are Christian elements left in that portion of the Mohammedan world, it is because of the protection afforded them by France ever since the time of Francis I. The Syrians do not want to lose French aid and pro-

tection in their hour of emancipation. If the Peace Conference left the Syrians without European aid, they would be as badly off as under the Turks; worse off, in fact, because they would be deprived of the protection against Mohammedan fanaticism that France has hitherto been able to give in virtue of her treaties with the Sublime Porte. And if the mandate to organize Syria were granted to some other nation, it would be a violation of France's moral right and a refusal to recognize the sentimental interests of France in Syria.

I have said that it is not an easy task for us to reconcile America's "fourteen points" with France's "fourteen points," but is it a hopeless task? No—emphatically no. It is hopeless only if we go about it in the wrong way.

During the latter half of 1917 and the whole year of 1918 I enjoyed unusual opportunities of coming into close contact with French public opinion throughout the country. In every part of France I talked with bourgeois, peasants, and

working-men about the peace that should be made after the war. At the tables of *préfets* and *maires* and “*notables*” I discussed the coming peace conference, and what would be France’s attitude toward peace after the collapse of Germany. In village cafés and the homes of peasants I tried out the ideas I was gathering in educated circles. I went to industrial and mining centers to talk with foremen, factory hands, miners, skilled and unskilled laborers. I asked the small functionaries and the railway men to give me their ideas. Except among *intellectuels*, there was little knowledge of the aims and aspirations expressed in the French Government’s program as I have outlined it above. In industrial circles I found some notions, but not always accurate or fair, of the Government’s intentions when the day of making peace should arrive. Nowhere in France and in no class of society did I find enthusiasm and unqualified approval of what I have called France’s “fourteen points.” On the other hand, in industrial circles,

and sometimes among *intellectuels*, there was warm advocacy of President Wilson's "fourteen points."

Social unrest is widespread in France; the people are in a state of high nervous tension. The war has imposed upon them sacrifices so great in every way that they are ripe for a complete and radical change in international relations. The war lasted too long. Jingoism, chauvinism, militarism, imperialism, aggressive nationalism, the usual unlovely concomitants of victory, are manifest only in the newspapers, which fail singularly to reflect public opinion in France, and in small elements of the population whose strength and influence are absurdly overestimated. The vision of a new world, set forth in the American program for peace and in President Wilson's speeches before and during the conference, would have appealed in any circumstances to the underlying chivalry and idealism of French character. Under present conditions the appeal is more potent than we realize.

Where, then, is the support for a peace pro-

gram which seems on the surface to be a consecration of old and discredited methods of establishing peace after a war? Why did the Chamber of Deputies give an overwhelming vote of confidence to the Government after Monsieur Pichon's exposition of foreign policy? Why did the French nation stand behind Premier Clemenceau in the initial period of the Peace Conference? The answer to these questions is summed up in one short phrase, *the instinct of self-preservation*.

If we can make it clear to the French people that the society of nations will first of all protect them against the possibility of a renewal of German aggression, and will afford them certain and rapid means of recovering and holding their industrial and commercial and moral position in the post-bellum period, no reactionary forces in France are strong enough to prevent them from accepting the American program for peace in its entirety.

How and in what measure is the United States willing to aid and stand by France after the

war? We must satisfy France on this point; then everything else will follow as we, and the French with us, have dreamed it, as we, and the French with us, certainly want it.

CHAPTER VII

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF NORTHERN FRANCE ¹

AS we walked through the streets of Soissons, the old priest, who was making his first visit to the invaded regions, groaned anew at every step. The architect and I, accustomed to seeing destroyed cities ever since the first mad rush of the Hun toward Paris, were affected by our companion's distress. When we reached the cathedral the priest's despair brought forth words. Raising his hands to heaven, he cried:

"Ossa ista resurgent? Domine, tu scis."

"Men also know, *mon père*," answered the architect, gently. "For God restricts the resurrecting power of men only when it is a question of human bones. We can enter by the transept door, and you will see."

¹ June, 1919.

We climbed over a mound of fallen stone. Pieces of statues and gargoyles protruded from the amorphous mass. Bits of stained glass gleamed in the sun. An angel's face stared up at us from a chunk of plaster. My cane disengaged a twisted brass candlestick. The priest stooped over to pick up the INRI of a crucifix. We had to make our way carefully to avoid splinters of carved panels. But when we entered the cathedral we realized that German cannon had not prevented the *Soissonnais* from saving the heritage of their fathers. The roof of the nave and of part of the transept had already been replaced. The high altar was prepared for mass. Sand-bags protected tombs and shrines.

With glowing face, the architect pointed to a wall built from pillar to pillar to shut off the nave. "We were determined to keep the apse intact and strengthen the corner pillars. All this was done under the enemy's fire. Part of it has been done twice. And now we are clearing out the nave and rebuilding the walls and roof."

We went to the other side of the temporary

wall. German prisoners, French soldiers, civilian masons were working side by side.

The next day at Cambrai we visited a textile-mill which the Germans had turned into a soda-water factory. Some buildings were empty. The fine looms in others had lost their copper fittings, and had afterward been smashed with axes by Russian prisoners. An explosion had wrecked the machines in the power-plant.

"I am glad you came this week," said the superintendent, "for we are going to begin to remove the débris. New looms are all ready to be put in place. If we can get raw materials and coal, work will start up within a month."

At Lille we found the same eagerness to go ahead without waiting for government initiative or German indemnities. The first winter of liberation was a cruel deception. So inadequate and dilatory were the steps taken by the military authorities that the people had become bitter.

"Nineteen hundred and nineteen is the crucial year," an automobile manufacturer assured us. "Our biggest problems are those of trans-

portation, and we can accomplish little without government aid. But if we wait for the Government to take up and direct reconstruction work we shall soon be beyond redemption. There is confusion, if not anarchy, in the various government bureaus. We have to keep pressing Paris to give us food-supplies and a minimum provision of raw materials. We insist now that we be allowed to buy machinery and whatever else we need for reconstruction where and how we will. My plant was used by the Germans throughout their occupation, and they tried to burn it when they left. I started in immediately to repair what could be repaired, and to order new machinery. You can have no idea of the difficulties the Government put in our way."

In Fives, a suburb of Lille, we visited one of the most important steel-construction plants in France. Here locomotives and rolling-stock for the Northern Railway Company were made before the war. The Germans sacked the plant, removing what they could of the machinery and destroying the rest. But ever since 1915 the

Compagnie de Fives-Lille had been preparing for the day of liberation. In their own shops, in a branch in central France, machines have been made. They are awaiting transportation. After the plant is restored some means must be devised to keep it supplied with coal and raw materials.

Throughout northern France the will to get back to normal activity is manifest. There is the spur of necessity. Everywhere, as at Fives-Lille, employers and artisans and laborers know that the path of salvation is in the resumption of production. In agricultural regions there is the same unbroken spirit. And illustrations are numerous of local efforts to preserve historic monuments, as at Soissons; of refusal to leave homes unless forcibly ejected by the military authorities. Going through what seemed to be entirely ruined cities, one is constantly surprised at the sight of people who are working to make the ruins habitable.

But six months after the armistice one is tempted to doubt the efficiency, the capacity, the

ability of a government in Paris to undertake and carry through reconstruction in the invaded departments. Students of democratic institutions are watching with keen interest the problems that have arisen. The doctrine of state control of industries is being tested. Is there a feeling of solidarity in the nation? Are the people as a whole willing to make sacrifices for the common weal? Is it possible for a highly centralized democracy to cope with the difficulties of certain categories of citizens, especially when those citizens belong to a restricted portion of the state? Or must the North be allowed a free hand in working out its own salvation, with only limited dependence upon, and limited expectation of, aid from the rest of the nation? Decentralization, a large measure of local autonomy, power of initiative left in the hands of municipalities and communes, seem necessary in order that "these bones rise again."

In 1915 the Ministry of the Interior established a special department to study the needs and look after the interests of the invaded regions. The

prerogatives of bureaucracy were encroached upon. A howl went up. Soon the services of this department were distributed among the ministries of Public Works, Agriculture, and Commerce. When Hindenburg executed his "genial retreat," resulting in the liberation of a hundred communes, the preparations of the Government proved of no practical value. So reconstruction interests were once more grouped under a new ministry, called the Ministry of the Blockade and of the Liberated Regions.

In the autumn of 1918 the Germans began their retreat from Flanders. Government preparations again proved inadequate. There was chaos. No one was responsible. Every problem was referred to some other bureau. After the armistice, the Ministry of Armament was reorganized into the Ministry of Industrial Reconstruction, with a limited field which touched the North only in part. At the end of 1918 reconstruction questions were intrusted to a *Commission Inter-Ministérielle*, with representatives of the *Présidents du Conseil* and the ministries of

the Liberated Regions, War, Public Works, Agriculture, Industrial Reconstruction, Commerce, and Finance. Premier Clemenceau appointed as president of this commission an eminent Frenchman who had been urging its creation for more than three years!

To assure the transformation and continued activity of factories which worked for the Ministry of War, the Ministry of Industrial Reconstruction was granted a credit of two billion francs. Monsieur Loucheur, under whose guidance French industry intensified its production during the war, is using this money for ships, locomotives and rolling-stock, agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and the different machines and materials needed to reconstruct the invaded regions. But, as two birds must be killed with one stone, the orders are given wholly to French factories on French soil. Part of the money goes to plants created by the state during the war, and part to enterprises that worked in connection with the former Ministry of Armament. The Government had built an arsenal at Roanne

for cannon and shells, and a plant at Bourges for explosives. The former will repair old and construct new railway rolling-stock, and the latter will make chemical fertilizers. Private factories which furnished wood for aëroplanes have been given orders for doors and window-frames and shingles. Telegraph and telephone material is expected to be produced by factories which made aëroplane motors. The new ministry has authority to distribute indemnities, to import raw materials, to allot labor-supply, and to apportion transportation.

It is admitted that the idea is a good one, and that state aid is necessary to tide industry over the critical period of cessation of war work and demobilization. The state must also control transportation and importation of raw materials. But public opinion fears waste of money, new burdens upon taxpayers, discouragement of individual enterprise, and, above all, the crystallization of state control. Critics are legion to point out the difficulties. One cannot pick up a newspaper without seeing an article protesting

against the Ministry of Industrial Reconstruction. Since large investments must be made for new machinery, will not the extension of state industrialism, justified during the war by considerations of national defense, tend to become permanent? Will private factories get their share of the orders? Will not the state, backed by public money, compete with private industrial establishments? If there is overproduction, the state will be tempted to forbid competition. If there is increase in the cost of production, the state will be tempted to regulate prices, or lose public funds in trying to compete with private enterprises and foreigners. The hands in state establishments need a period of apprenticeship, which will cause great delay in turning out the products sorely needed. The Ministry of Industrial Reconstruction is attempting to solve industrial problems of the whole of France at the expense of sacrificing the immediate and pressing necessities of the North. Are the manufacturers of the North to be made to wait for their machinery, and the people of the North for

their homes, in order to safeguard the industrial interests of other regions, which have been fostered and developed during the past five years through the misfortunes of the North?

The policy of the French Government in regard to the use of imported merchandise in the reconstruction of northern France is already unmistakably defined. There is going to be no competition between French and foreign-manufactured articles in France. Following the example of other belligerents, the French Government has been requiring importation licenses for all goods brought into the country. The reasons for controlling importations during the war were sound. Precious transportation facilities had to be reserved for articles of absolute necessity, and purchases abroad were limited in order to prevent the depreciation of the franc in foreign exchanges. Until peace is signed, war legislation holds. After peace is signed, it is certain that pressure will be brought to bear to protect French industry by levying high import duties.

But the Lille automobile manufacturer said,

“Nineteen hundred and nineteen is the crucial year.” In half a dozen industrial centers of the North I received support for this opinion from men in every line of production. All fear the influence of five years of lost markets upon their home and foreign trade. They feel that if they do not get back to their normal production quickly, they will find closed doors—at home as well as abroad.

The five departments of northern France produced three fourths of France's coke and one fourth of France's steel, most of which was transformed into manufactured articles on the spot. The woolen industry, at Roubaix, Tourcoing, Cambrai, Sedan, and Rheims disputed with silk the first rank in France's foreign commerce. Since 80 per cent. of woolen weaving was in the North, and the North furnished the other 20 per cent. of raw materials, French woolen cloth has virtually disappeared from Paris markets. Most of France's linen was spun at Armentières, Lille, Bailleul, Comines, Cambrai, and Valenciennes; of her cotton at Roubaix, Tourcoing,

Lille, Saint-Quentin, and Amiens. The Pas-de-Calais was famous for its linen and cotton lace. Among other products were pottery, glass, and chemicals. The Département du Nord alone had an industrial production of four billion francs annually before the war, of which two and a half billions were in textile industries.

In considering the problem of industrial reconstruction, too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the fact that the textile industry of the North was not a phenomenon of the nineteenth century, and consequently did not owe its preëminent situation to the nearness of coal. Roubaix, Tourcoing, Courtrai, Armentières, Valenciennes, Cambrai, and Le Cateau were famous for their textile exports as early as the fifteenth century. Flanders was the richest and most populous country of Europe during the Middle Ages. Its woolen, linen, and cotton cloth are the development of ten generations. The wealth of France's northern departments was in the skill and number of the artisans. All of France's weavers of fine cloth were settled there. Within

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a radius of fifty miles of Lille one found three quarters of France's skilled workmen for five industries, more than half for thirteen, and more than a third for twenty-three. Fecundity and the handing down of traditions and knowledge on the part of the artisans, and bold use of capital and credit on the part of the manufacturers, made the North supreme in French industry.

The first thought, then, of the manufacturers of the North is to prevent organic ruin through the loss of skilled workmen. The only way this can be done is to start factories immediately. They cannot afford to wait for machinery and raw materials. Otherwise, the emigration that has already started will continue.

On the eve of his first departure from America, President Wilson spoke to Congress about the obligation of the world toward the regions that suffered from the German invasion. His specific mention of the necessity of granting commercial favors during the period of reconstruction is deeply appreciated in northern France. But months have passed since then, and noth-

ing definite has been proposed on either side of the Atlantic for the restoration of French and Belgian industries. The Peace Conference has lost itself in a maze of problems relating to the past and future of mankind. In the meantime, a hundred miles from Paris, a tragedy is being enacted which may affect more profoundly than treaties the new European equilibrium. The morale of the people of the liberated regions, which resisted superbly during four years of German occupation, is being undermined by forced unemployment and by the feeling that others are taking advantage of their misfortunes—more subtle forces of demoralization than invasion and exile.

A Lillois put the situation to me in this way: "In other parts of France factories prospered during the war. As their products were for war purposes, they were allowed to keep some of their personnel and the rest was gradually demobilized. They received subsidies from the Government and enjoyed special transportation facilities. Ever since nineteen-fourteen they have been em-

ploying our demobilized and refugee artisans. To-day our engineers, foremen, and skilled workmen are bound elsewhere by contracts and by not having jobs here to return to. It would be enough for us to contend, at the beginning of the reconstruction era, with famine and high prices and the delays in getting started arising from rebuilding, restocking, and gathering together again our working forces. But we have the opposition of our own countrymen who are not interested in seeing us get on our feet. We do not succeed in securing permits to import machinery from abroad. Why? Because, having lost war orders, manufacturers of central and southern France want the monopoly of making new machines for us. They even refuse to admit that we have a right to priority in the importation and transportation of raw materials. The anxiety of the Government seems to be confined to sustaining the activity and expansion of the manufacturers who reaped rich rewards during the war."

A year ago, in the darkest days of the ad-

vance on Paris, I was lecturing in one of the large steel-plants of the Loire Inférieure. The chief engineer was a refugee from northern France. He was not pessimistic about the war, for he felt that Germany was at the end of her rope. He predicted an internal collapse of Germany in the autumn of 1918, no matter what her military situation might be at the time. But he was exceedingly pessimistic about the post-bellum relations between the invaded regions and the rest of France. He told me that the Government had no reconstruction policy, and that failure to take immediate measures for the relief of the North would be as disastrous to the nation as a whole as to the invaded regions.

"I do not go so far as to predict civil war," he said. "That would be absurd as well as impossible. But I do say that the most deplorable result of this war for France is likely to be the creation of ill-feeling on the part of the North toward the rest of France which will weaken seriously the solidarity of the French nation."

At the Peace Conference the French insist

upon the right to the special consideration of their allies. They say that they have borne the brunt of the war, have made the greatest sacrifices, are exposed to the greatest dangers and handicaps in the post-bellum period. Not only for their own sake, but for the common cause, are not the French justified in asking for favored treatment? The war is not yet won, and a strong France emerging from the Peace Conference is essential to prevent Germany from winning the war. However, it is equally important for the French Government to realize in turn the justice of exactly the same claim to special consideration that comes from its citizens of the invaded regions. What France has been in the Entente Alliance, northern France has been in the French Republic.

The North must face competition with new factories created in other parts of France, and with the intact and admirably equipped factories of Alsace-Lorraine, in a country of stationary population, which means stationary consumption. The North has lost foreign markets. Great

Britain now produces all the articles formerly manufactured in northern France and can supply them at home and abroad at lower prices. For the time being German markets are lost, and in attempting to recover them northern France will have the competition of Alsace-Lorraine. Japan is looking after the Far East. South America is learning to buy from the United States. A Lille newspaper said recently that three nightmares were haunting the sleep of the manufacturers of the North—inability to recreate industries soon enough to prevent organic ruin; a new catastrophe, when production is resumed, through a lowering of prices or overproduction; trouble with labor, which is likely to spread all over France.

Northerners believe that the speedy restoration of their industries is the most vital task of reconstruction, which should take precedence for the moment over rebuilding cities and aiding agriculture. For organic ruin is imminent. The communities of artisans are the precious heritage of centuries. If they are allowed to scatter, the

revenues upon which France is counting for recuperating her finances will not materialize. The manufacturers of the North protest against the narrow point of view of virtually all outsiders, who conceive the reconstruction of northern France in terms of brick and stone, cement and wood. In talks with those who do not see the problems of the North from the chair of a functionary in a Paris ministry or through the eyes of one who has made a two-days' trip in the devastated regions, I have gathered the following conditions of renaissance:

(1) *State aid to restore credits.* Without waiting for the Germans to pay, the state must advance indemnities sufficient for rebuilding and repairing, replacing machinery, restocking in raw materials, and carrying wages until returns come in from articles marketed.

(2) *Exceptions for the North in the application of administrative regulations.* The exception the North asks for most insistently at the present moment is waiving the principle of demobilization by classes. The North demands the

release from the army of artisans, miners, and fathers of families of the northern departments, irrespective of age. Follow the suspension of the income and other state taxes, the modification of tariff duties and import and export regulations, in favor of the North. Northerners point out also the unfairness of uniform rules, which apply equally to them, in regard to the allotment of transportation and the distribution of imported raw materials.

(3) *A separate administrative régime for all the invaded regions during the period of reconstruction.* Flanders, Artois, Picardy, Champagne, and Lorraine are distinct provinces, with different needs and different characteristics. During the years of recuperation and readjustment each province must enjoy an autonomy that is not possible under the administrative system of present-day France, with its artificial departmental limits, each department depending upon Paris and having to conform to the general laws, decrees, and regulations enacted for all of France. At the same time, the five provinces

have many interests in common, owing to the privileged position they hope to have during the reconstruction period. They ask, therefore, to be allowed to deal with the various branches of the Government at Paris through an intermediate regional administration centered at Lille.

(4) *Special and distinct provisions, national and international, in regard to commerce and tariffs.* France, in her customs duties, must favor the industries of the North. In treaties of commerce and tariff regulations, Allied countries should waive restrictions concerning exports and imports intended for and coming from the north of France until the invaded regions are on their feet.

It must not be forgotten that only a portion of the invaded regions was destroyed in the physical sense of the word. With the exception of Rheims, the nucleus of industrial life could be re-established everywhere without waiting for the rebuilding of homes. Work is the magnet that draws men to cities. After one gets a job, he

looks for a home. It is putting the cart before the horse to plan and carry out a wholesale program of reconstruction of cities and towns, until means of livelihood are safeguarded to those who remained during the cataclysm and assured to those invited* to return. Whoever has lived through an earthquake or fire or struggle between armies knows how tenaciously human beings cling to the place where they earn their daily bread. One finds shelter somehow where he has work. The best elements of a population do not flee before danger and a shortage of food. Unemployment and lack of opportunity to get ahead in the world, however, drive very quickly from a community the workers of real economic value. More than once I have seen the order to evacuate a town meet with stubborn resistance on the part of people whose homes were being shelled and destroyed. The same type of urban population, which did not flee before the Germans, is now leaving cities of northern France of its own initiative.

Agricultural reconstruction goes hand in hand

with industrial reconstruction. Cereals and meat can be sent into the North. But until local agriculture is in a position to furnish potatoes, green vegetables, fruits, and dairy products, high prices and the lack of a well-rounded food diet will affect economic and health conditions in industrial communities. More than this, the sugar and linen industries are dependent upon local production of beets and flax. Before the war northern France had a quarter of a million acres sown in flax. Since the flax of Pomerania and Russia is not likely to come into the market again for several years, this raw material is an indispensable asset.

In the strip of territory from the North Sea to Switzerland, where the armies faced each other during the years of trench warfare, much of the land is dead. The problem of bringing it to life again will take a long time to solve. Returning it to cultivation cannot be undertaken by its owners. The state must bear the expense of clearing it, of filling in the trenches and shell-holes, of fertilization and reforestation. There must be

military supervision of this work, for unexploded shells and hand-grenades are likely to be turned up in any field through which or near which the trenches ran. The strain was severe, also, upon the forests and farms throughout the provinces occupied by the Germans. Fields were plowed constantly, sowed without manure, and used for intensive production of the same crops. They are exhausted, and need to lie fallow for a while. Since fertilization out of proportion to the gain from the yield is required for at least five years, the Government will have to provide the farmers with fertilizers. There is nothing haphazard about location and extent of forests in France. The situation and proportion of wooded lands could not be allowed to change without affecting water-supply and climate. Nothing is more imperative than the reconstruction of forests under state guidance.

The pillage by the Huns of farms was scarcely less thorough than that of factories. The invaders made a clean sweep of agricultural machinery, farm implements, copper kitchen utensils,

bedding, horses, live stock, poultry, and seed. In the first renewal of the armistice Marshal Foch added the delivery of agricultural machinery to the delivery of locomotives and rolling-stock provided for in the original armistice. I suppose he did not go farther in demanding the return of stolen property only because what the Germans took from the farmers of the North had ceased to exist.

The delegates on the Armistice Commission at Spa, as well as the peace delegates at Paris, have been warned not to try to exact the pound of flesh. But is the criticism that France wants to take advantage of Germany's helplessness justified? If France does not secure restitution from Germany, she will have to devise some measures—and without delay—to furnish those who were robbed with means of subsistence and production. The estimate of a competent authority that the failure to plow land in February and March, 1919, will result in the loss of two billions of francs throws light upon the attitude of the French delegates.

A year before the end of the war, contractors and builders presented a memorandum to the Government suggesting reconstruction measures that should be decided upon in advance. They pointed out that as soon as the armistice was signed, skilled workers in building trades and their employers should be released from military service; factories working for war material should be ready to devote their energies to replacing what was destroyed; and the privilege of priority in transport, given to war material during hostilities, should automatically be accorded to reconstruction material. The category of "skilled workers in building trades and their employers" should include all workers in wood, stone, and cement. Cannon- and shell-factories should be ready to turn out rolling-stock and auto-trucks, iron girders, bridges, and machinery for the factories in the North. Adequate production of agricultural machinery could be assured only by the manufacture of uniform types in series. The state must have ready a plan to recruit an army of builders and carpenters and

masons, and to house and feed reconstruction workers.

But in spite of numerous bureaus and commissions, nothing was done along these lines. The cessation of hostilities found the Government unprepared to grapple with the problem of rebuilding in the devastated areas. The Government is being bitterly criticized now for lack of foresight, and for the slow progress made since the armistice. One must not forget, however, that it was still nip and tuck for France during the last year of the war—perhaps more so than in the earlier years. Victory was a miracle in itself. Was it reasonable to expect another miracle—the change over night to reconstruction with unimpaired energy and ability?

An experimental stage in reconstruction was inevitable. However pressing the needs, actual progress could hardly have been expected during the first winter of liberation. Divergence of opinion was bound to arise, and governmental machinery to break down. After catastrophes, the indifference and apathy of those who have

not suffered, and the desire of ghouls of all classes of society to take advantage of the misfortunes of others always come to the surface. On the other hand, the problems of reconstruction are clearer than they were *à priori*. Wrong methods and impracticable schemes, which threatened to waste time and money and divert energy, are discredited. What the French did not know when the armistice was signed they know now. They are ready to do their own part in binding up the wounds of their brothers of the North and in nursing them through the period of convalescence back to health. They are ready to accept and direct the loving aid offered by friends of France in other countries.

On March 8th, at a meeting of the *Union des Grandes Associations Françaises*, Monsieur Deschanel, of the French Academy, who is President of the Chamber of Deputies, said: "The inhabitants of our invaded departments wonder whether the rest of France and foreigners realize what has really taken place." The challenge in these words was answered. By a unanimous

vote, the representatives of the national organizations declared the responsibility of the rest of France in the matter of reconstruction, and the solidarity of the rest of France with the northern provinces.

The provinces devastated by the Germans have the right to look to France and not to Germany for financing their rehabilitation. The reparation for her crimes Germany owes to France as a whole. It is the business of the French Government to collect damages from Germany. But the restoration of northern France should not depend upon when and how much indemnity is paid. As France did not succeed in defending the integrity of her territory, every Frenchman must recognize the debt of honor he owes personally to the invaded regions, and assent to the sacrifices necessary to finance reconstruction. The consideration of interest enters into the question also. Upon the rapid rehabilitation of the North depends the recuperation—political, economic, social—of France.

For months after the liberation of the North,

the provinces remained in the zone of the armies, subjected to military administration. The result was complete paralysis. Not until municipal and communal authority was reëstablished did the work of reconstruction begin. The new plan adopted by the Government is to divide the northern departments into districts, each autonomous, with the privilege of recruiting its own workers and with control of its own transportation. How and when and whether this or that town or village or this or that building in the town or village is to be rebuilt will be decided upon by the people of each community. Is not this the only way? Of the 102,000 buildings destroyed by the Germans, considerably less than one half of 1 per cent. were built or owned by the French Government. If the 99½ per cent. are to rise from their ashes, it will be by individual, corporative, and communal effort.

The heart of the world has been touched by the misery of northern France. Two continents share the eagerness to aid in reconstruction. French cities which did not suffer from the Ger-

man invasion have adopted cities of the North as *fillets*. The idea was taken up in Allied countries, especially in the United States. My American readers often write to me, asking how they can help France. No letter has touched me more deeply than one from a father whose only son was killed in the advance from the Marne to the Vesle. He was ready to reconstruct, at his own expense, the town in which his son fell. He named a place of less than a thousand inhabitants, the rebuilding of which I found would cost about two million dollars. But in this case, as in all others, reconstruction could not be undertaken *en bloc*. In coöperation with the communal authorities, the American father might rebuild the *mairie*, the school, the fountains, the *lavoir*, or the church. Homes and shops and local industries—these depend upon the needs of the community, which may be entirely changed. Only the people of each community can do their rebuilding—and in their own way.

Ossa ista resurgent? Perhaps, after all, we

must say with the priest, *Domine, tu scis*. For the answer depends upon an unknown factor, the will of the people concerned. The illustration of the cathedral at Soissons, however, is significant. Our part in the reconstruction of northern France is to make the necessary sacrifices, as governments and individuals, to show our solidarity with those who have suffered for us. We can make possible reconstruction. We can smooth the path for and strengthen those who are called upon to perform one of the most formidable tasks of history. At the least, we can refrain from discouraging them by indifference and inclination to profit by their misfortunes. But, when all is said and done, the reconstruction of northern France depends upon the people of northern France.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CASE AGAINST CAILLAUX ¹

AFTER the disappearance of the Second Empire in the cataclysm of 1870, Thiers dominated France. The man who had to make a humiliating peace with Germany died before the new form of government for France was definitely decided upon. But he lived long enough to set the example which has been followed throughout the half-century of the Third Republic. France has had her parliament, free from the control of the executive and master of the policies of the nation. There has been a Government and an Opposition. But leaders have not arisen from parties through advocacy of party programs and been maintained in public life by defense of the principles and attachment to the interests of their party. We hunt

¹ November, 1919.

in vain to find continuity in French political parties. We cannot even classify groups or parties by a general adherence to political and economic concepts or tendencies. The French have no equivalents for parties as we understand them in the Anglo-Saxon world. I have often been asked to indicate what parties were similar to Conservative and Liberal, Republican and Democrat, or even Labor. I do not try to answer. Any attempt at identification of parties and groups in the Chamber of Deputies with political divisions of the House of Commons and Congress involves one in hopeless contradiction.

Did Thiers stand for the establishment of a republic or the restoration of the monarchy or empire? We do not know. Thiers rallied France around him to meet the crisis of the hour—the recovery of France from the disaster of defeat by Prussia. In every country where political leaders have to depend upon the electorate for continuing in office, they are opportunists. But with the British and ourselves politicians are limited by traditional policies and are

bound by party organization. Personal popularity and a personal following are precious assets. And yet, however powerful a man may be, he has to go before the public with party backing. The greatest leader in contemporary American life bucked the system without success. The failure of the Bull Moose campaign and the inability of brilliant British and Dominion statesmen to maintain their power after abandoning their party give proof of the ascendancy of parties over men in Anglo-Saxondom.

Only if we keep in mind this essential difference can we hope to understand French politics. The parliamentary history of the Third Republic is a stirring drama of man pitted against man. Personalities and not principles have dominated. Individuals have espoused causes and raised issues and have appealed for support to parliament and people, untrammelled by the general concepts and particular planks of party programs. This explains the insurmountable difficulty that confronts the Paris correspondent of a London or a New York newspaper when he tries

to make clear to his readers the result of a general election in France. One has to give up trying to draw deductions from the distribution of seats, and to prophesy party alignments in the choice of premiers when a new cabinet is being formed. It explains the uncertainty of the life of a cabinet. Above all, it is our clue to the bitter struggles between leaders that seem so unintelligible to us. Jules Ferry, Gambetta, Boulanger, Paul Déroulède, Waldeck-Rousseau, Combes, Briand, Viviani, Caillaux, and Clemenceau—we have a general idea of what these men have stood for (perhaps!), but when we try to class them with parties or fixed and continuous policies emanating from parties, we begin to flounder.

Now that I have cleared the decks for action by renouncing any attempt to identify French politicians with parties or to establish an analogy between French and our own political systems, it is possible to discuss the Caillaux case.

Since the Dreyfus affair, which mystified and then shocked public opinion in Great Britain and

America, no political scandal in France has equalled the Caillaux affair. Like Dreyfus, Caillaux has been charged with high treason, and had his case tried in the newspapers before it was tried in court. Public opinion has adjudged him guilty and has not protested against an unusually long term of imprisonment without the case ever coming before a jury. Whatever we Anglo-Saxons may think of Caillaux, the fact of long imprisonment without trial upsets us. The protection of the individual through the Habeas Corpus Act is a corner-stone of Anglo-Saxon liberty. If Caillaux is guilty of the charges against him, why has he not been brought to trial? Bolo, Duval, and Lenoir, with whom he is supposed to have been associated, were convicted and shot.

A study of the evidence in the Caillaux case, such as has been published in the newspapers, and of the methods of the press campaign against Caillaux, give rise to grave misgivings in the minds of the seeker after the truth. Caillaux has been in prison for more than two years. Al-

though constantly hinted at and frequently promised, no proof of his guilt of the treason with which he has been charged has been published. The letters and telegrams made public, and the evidence brought out in trials for treason in France and Italy, afford only the most circumstantial evidence against Caillaux of intelligence with the enemy. We are not sure that Caillaux saw or had communication with the German Minister in Argentina in 1914. There is a tangle of contradiction in the whole story about his visit to Rome. No direct proof involves Caillaux in dealings with German agents in Switzerland or Spain. The accusations hinted at in the trials in connection with the *Bonnet Rouge* and the *Journal* have never been substantiated. Many of the stories that were allowed by the Government to be printed to discredit Caillaux, such as having securities hidden in a safe-deposit box in Florence to avoid his own income tax and having increased his personal fortune during and since his premiership, were disproved. But, as in the Dreyfus case, the newspapers of France, almost with-

out exception, have failed to give Caillaux's side of the story. When some newspapers attempted to do so, the testimony in his favor was cut out by the military censorship.

A prominent Paris lawyer said to me some months ago: "I have the clearest sort of moral conviction that Caillaux has been mixed up with the Germans before and during the war in treasonable dealings, and I have no sympathy with him. He ought to be shot. But speaking from a legal point of view, we have no case against him and could not secure his conviction even in a court martial. If his case ever does come before the High Court of the Senate, I doubt if he gets more than Malvy—a decree of expulsion."

"Then why has he been kept in prison so long without trial?" I asked. "To my Anglo-Saxon mind that does not seem in accord with the elementary principles of justice."

"Ah! *mon ami*," the lawyer answered quickly, "you know as well as I that the Tiger knows what he is about. *Salus populi suprema lex* is justification for anything. As he had gone into

office on the pledge of getting after the traitors and breaking up the defeatist campaign, Clemenceau would have been a fool to allow Caillaux to remain at liberty in France or elsewhere. To try him and not secure a conviction was a risk our *chère patrie* could not run."

I could only agree with the lawyer. I did agree with him heart and soul. The mortal danger to France of the insidious defeatist campaign was fully appreciated by those who came into contact with it, as I had done. When the Germans knew that American aid would inevitably ruin their hopes of military success, they bent their energies to the task of demoralizing France from the rear. The cost of the struggle had been fearful. The nervous tension was growing. American military aid came slowly. The ground was ripe for a propaganda to make "an honorable peace" before France was hopelessly ruined. When Clemenceau made his famous speech against traitors and defeatists in the Senate, heroic measures were necessary if France were to carry on. It is well enough for those

who are far from the scene of action to talk about technical legal procedure and to view a situation impassively and objectively. But in time of crisis quick and energetic action, regardless of the niceties of law, is imperative. "*Je fais la guerre*," said Clemenceau. When you are struggling for existence, you have not time to be concerned with the legitimate safeguards that the law and a sense of abstract justice erect for the protection of individuals.

Clemenceau arrested the men who were undermining the faith of France in ultimate victory or questioning the wisdom of continuing the war *jusqu'au bout*. Vulgar traitors, who gave the enemy a voice in the French press, were shot. Extremists, many of them sincere but none the less playing the game of Germany, were silenced. Senator Humbert, chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs, was jailed for letting the influential *Journal*, of which he was proprietor and editor, get into the hands of Germany. Former Minister of the Interior Malvy, despite the testimony in his behalf of the four war Pre-

miers (Viviani, Briand, Ribot, and Painlevé), was sent into exile for not having stopped the defeatist propaganda. Former Premier Caillaux was locked up in La Santé Prison and kept there.

Public sentiment was overwhelmingly behind Clemenceau in every step he took to strengthen the country internally. This was not because Clemenceau came in on the turn of the tide. As dark days, from the military point of view, as any his predecessors faced had to be lived through. And the country was more exhausted and more enervated. Nor was it because the blows he struck, not sparing the highest, cowed the defeatists. The propaganda continued. Powerful friends of Caillaux and the entire Socialist press demanded a speedy trial or release for lack of evidence. One of the two most influential newspapers of the provinces tried to remain "Caillautist" in defiance of the censorship and other forms of governmental pressure. The Chamber of Deputies was hostile to the new premier and not unfriendly to the fallen leader.

Clemenceau remained in power to pilot France through the "last quarter of an hour" to victory, because he dared to keep Caillaux in jail and press the trials of the others. If he had weakened, if he had yielded to technical legal proof, if he had been faithful to his own lifelong advocacy of a free press, he would have been lost—and France with him. The fundamental common sense of the people, a national instinct of self-preservation, put and kept France behind the man who embodied the traditional spirit of France.

Public men in Anglo-Saxon countries sometimes get themselves into trouble and lose their influence and popularity. Guessing wrong, or failing to succeed, or leading badly, are causes of disgrace the world over. Democracies do not spare their idols and heroes. But with us the public man, who has held a position such as Caillaux held, is protected against universal antipathy and condemnation by party solidarity. Newspapers and individuals lose confidence in party leaders and their policies. But they rarely

turn openly against them for fear of "hurting the party." They are reserved in public expression of their changed opinions. The old chief is saved from a sheep-like and universal turning away of allegiance by our party system. The chief has been spokesman for his party. Discrediting him is discrediting the party and threatens to ruin the political future of the man who indulges in violent and open denunciation or who abandons the erstwhile leader. For instance, would it not be interesting to hear "honest-to-God" opinions of prominent Democrats on Mr. Wilson and of prominent Republicans on Mr. Lodge? Our mugwampery takes refuge in the secrecy of the ballot-box.

It is not so in France. Nothing is easier than the rôle of Peter in French politics. Ten years ago Joseph Caillaux, *Président du Conseil des Ministres de la République*, was the master of France by the will of the people expressed through their Deputies. Just before the war the crime of his wife dimmed his prestige. But he was Minister of Finance, holding down this

important post uncommonly well, and leader of the most influential French party. In the last general election the Radical Socialists had won a brilliant victory. And during the first three years of the war, despite his growing unpopularity and the suspicion noised abroad about his political activities outside of France, he was unofficial Minister of the Interior, acting through Malvy, with the internal administration of France in the hands of his appointees. It was not infrequently that your *cocher* or *chauffeur* or *concierge* would shake his head gravely and tell you that Caillaux was going to be the next premier. "The *bourgeois* will enjoy that, *hein!* *Qu'en dites-vous?*"

How a former premier and party leader, still enjoying sufficient power at the moment of his arrest to make him a real menace, could be shut up in a cell like a convicted criminal and gradually be forgotten, is not a simple matter to explain. At the time of the arrest of Caillaux, it was not believed that Clemenceau would have dared to take this step without damning proofs

of the former premier's guilt, or that the trial could be long postponed. Who would have predicted the end of the war, a year of peace negotiations, a new general election, the convening of a new parliament, with Caillaux still in prison and untried?

There are the obvious factors in the situation—the unusual power in the hands of a French premier owing to the highly centralized administrative system, enhanced by the state of war (control of the manhood of the nation mobilized in the army, suppression of right of assembly, free speech, free press, and martial law); Clemenceau's appeal for a free hand to win the war; his prestige through victory; the anxiety to make a profitable peace; the fear of labor getting out of hand or becoming contaminated with Bolshevism; the exhaustion of a great struggle.

If this were all there was in the Caillaux case, if it were simply a question of a discredited public man who had been discarded, it would not be worth our while to devote time and thought to Joseph Caillaux. We have so many important

problems to solve in this changing world of ours that the fortunes of one man, whether he be guilty or innocent, are of little importance. We might feel that a country which has allowed Caillaux to stay in jail for more than two years without trial, thus seemingly having already convicted him, will not be interested in the proceedings of the High Court of the Senate when Caillaux finally does come up for judgment. But, like the Dreyfus case, the Caillaux case is bound up with a period of history upon which judgment must be passed, with national politics, with currents of opinion of far-reaching influence and purport.

Bitterness against Caillaux and condemnation of Caillaux as a political leader are inspired by his fiscal policy and his foreign policy. He went counter to the natural instincts of his compatriots in the matter of taxation and the matter of relations with Germany. His unpopularity goes back to the income tax and to the Agadir incident. When he comes up for trial, the merits and demerits of his leadership in the years before

the war will be brought before the Senate to decide upon. France, whatever may be the fate of Caillaux personally, will find herself plunged into a bitter controversy concerning fiscal and foreign policies, past, present and future.

Students of British politics remember the feeling in England against Mr. Lloyd George, when, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he proposed to tax the "unearned increment" in land values. The Budget of 1909 arrayed against "the Welsh demagogue" all the Tories. The House of Lords rejected Mr. Lloyd George's "revolutionary" scheme. But as comparatively few people were affected by the tax, Mr. Lloyd George had the nation behind him. The country was appealed to a second time, and the fight ended in a serious curtailment of the prerogative of the House of Lords. One used to hear, however, the bitterest sort of criticism of Lloyd George for years after Limehouse. You cannot with impunity touch a man in his pocket-book.

The statesman in France who faced the unenviable task of Lloyd George in England, devis-

ing ways and means to increase the nation's revenue, was Joseph Caillaux. Like Lloyd George, he had a genius for finance, and his worst enemies admit his ability in budget-making. No other man in contemporary France has equaled Caillaux's record in handling the national finances. He had a harder task than Lloyd George and one that could not win him the favor and approval of the bulk of the electorate, however successful he might be. There are few great fortunes in France of any kind and none at all in land. Capital is widely distributed. Hundreds of thousands have income from investments. Taxing wealth, whether by an inheritance or an income tax, hits the entire nation and not a class. Caillaux's proposal of an income tax was not received with joy by millions of dispossessed, who would not have to pay it, as in Great Britain and America. (I am speaking of before the war, when the exemption figure was high.) Love of money and secretiveness in money matters are innate in the French. The proposal of Caillaux would take money from them and would compel

them to disclose to vulgar functionaries and to put on record where outsiders could see it the exact statement of their business and their family fortune.

Opposition to the income tax made Caillaux the man in France most hated by the "respectable elements," which include peasants and shopkeepers as well as aristocrats and bourgeois. Press and people determined to resist its application. The onus of proposing and sponsoring the income tax fell upon Caillaux and not upon the Radical Socialist party as a whole. The party was divided in fiscal policy and was able to shift the responsibility for the unpopular measure to Caillaux, who accepted it. He defended the income tax with great skill, using every argument he could lay his hands on. He condemned increasing and widening the scope of indirect taxes (dear to the French because they were being taxed without having the pain of handing money outright to the Government) on the ground of the great uncertainty in estimating them, the fear that levying additional taxation might lead

to restriction of use of the thing taxed and thus deceive the hopes of budget-makers, and the injustice of increasing the burden upon the small wage-earners and parents of large families. Then, as is the case always where a man becomes the embodiment of a principle that is difficult to combat in itself, the opponents of Caillaux's income tax began to seek to discredit the man in order to defeat the principle.

There was of course much that could be used against Caillaux. He was *véreux*, as the French say. But questionable honesty in political methods and in the stock-market is unfortunately the weakness of politicians as a class. And in France, corruption in private morals is also common among political leaders. If Madame Caillaux had refrained from shooting Gaston Calmette, editor of the *Figaro*, the world at large would have known little of Caillaux's private life. The enemies of Caillaux knew well enough that if the scandal brought out at the trial of Madame Caillaux was simply a *querelle de maîtresses*, Caillaux would not be permanently

ruined. Too many of them were tarred with the same brush. So they sought to pierce the armor of Caillaux at the one politically vulnerable point—his attitude, as *Président du Conseil*, toward Germany. It was planned to make the assault upon the author of the income tax at the closing session of his wife's trial for murder. But the war clouds broke with dramatic suddenness. There were no sensational disclosures. Madame Caillaux was acquitted. President Poincaré appealed to political leaders to form *l'union sacrée* to repel the invader.

Had the war been averted, had Great Britain failed to join France, had Germany won or pulled out with a draw, had the United States not given financial aid to France, Caillaux would have been the wise and far-seeing statesman to whom France ought to have listened. Until victory was assured, all his political opponents and the bourgeoisie at large feared the return of Caillaux to power. They may deny it now. But it is none the less true. Fortunately, Caillaux was not called from his cell in La Santé to

be a second Jules Favre. American intervention brought victory to the Entente. But whether or not the cards have fallen definitely against Caillaux depends upon the aftermath of the war. Is the menace of Germany removed? Is France going to be able to afford the price of victory? Standing alone, no. Protected by a military alliance with Great Britain and the United States, and aided by the Anglo-Saxon world during the period of reconstruction, yes. The judgment of history on the foreign policy of Joseph Caillaux depends upon the attitude of the British and ourselves toward France.

As Minister of Finance and *Président du Conseil*, Caillaux realized that the fiscal difficulties of France were largely due to the bad relations between France and Germany. Increasing sums had to be added to every budget for military equipment, for strengthening land fortifications, for the navy, and for the maintenance of a larger standing army. The population of Germany and the wealth of Germany were increasing by leaps and bounds. Public opinion in

France supported the prolongation of compulsory military service from two years to three years. But the nation's treasurer had to insist upon the unpalatable truth that the additional sacrifice involved money as well as one more year of a young man's life. You had to pay and feed and equip the extra soldiers and the extra officers required to train and command them. If public opinion insisted upon keeping pace with Germany, it must accept the income tax. The alternative was trying to come to an understanding with Germany.

The limits of a magazine article forbid going into the Anglo-French Treaty of 1904 and the resultant difficulties between France and Germany over the status of Morocco. The Alge-ciras Convention was differently interpreted by France and Germany and led to the sending of the German gunboat *Panther* to Agadir in 1911 "to protect German rights." It was Germany's way of forcing concessions from France elsewhere in Africa in return for German recognition of France's special position in Morocco.

Former Premier Clemenceau and former Foreign Secretary Delcassé had advocated the settlement of colonial problems by an understanding with Great Britain and looked to the British to aid France in case the conflict over African colonies led to German aggression in Europe. Caillaux (and he was by no means alone among French statesmen and publicists) believed that the friendship of Great Britain was not a sufficient guarantee for France against Germany, and that the wisest course for France was to compound colonial rivalries and ambitions with Germany by mutual concessions, as had been done with Great Britain in the agreement of 1904. Despite opposition that never died out even after the *fait accompli*, Caillaux negotiated and signed an agreement transferring to Germany sovereignty over a large part of the French Congo.

The anti-Caillautists and Anglophiles, of whom Clemenceau was one of the most able spokesmen, declared that France had been humiliated and betrayed. They argued that Germany's threat of war was a bluff, and that Great

Britain would have stood behind France to the bitter end if the Caillaux Cabinet had said *non possumus* to the German demands. Caillaux was accused of using the Agadir incident to play the stock-market.

In defense of his policy, Caillaux set forth the divergence of French and British foreign policy. He claimed that the British were of course willing to make the agreement of 1904 in order to secure advantages and remove opposition in Africa and Asia. But British interests were extra-European. France, on the other hand, was primarily interested in Europe. She was a continental power, in juxtaposition with Germany. For the sake of colonial aspirations, no matter how fully she could rely upon British backing, it was folly for France to keep alive the hostility of Germany when there was a possibility of establishing better relations with Germany. France had neither the money nor the man-power to continue indefinitely to be the enemy of her more populous continental neighbor. If no war came, the weight of armaments would eventually

crush France. If war came, it must be remembered that Great Britain had specifically limited her promise of aid to the protection of the Atlantic coast of France against naval aggression, and that, only in return for French naval protection of British interests in the Mediterranean.

All who were in Paris from August 1 to August 4, 1914, remember how nervous and uncertain French public opinion was in regard to British intervention. Sir Edward Grey told the House of Commons that Great Britain was not bound to give France military aid. The violation of Belgian neutrality precipitated British intervention. No one doubts that the British would have come to the aid of the French, even if the Germans had not committed this act of criminal folly. But it would not have been a simple matter to overcome the opposition of the Haldanes and Morleys and the strongly pacifist labor elements.

After the outbreak of the war Caillaux would not admit that he had been wrong in his estimate of the British and in his belief that the war was

an unqualified disaster to his country. Without actually committing himself to an opinion as to the military outcome, he still maintained that France and Germany had a common interest in terminating the war as soon as possible and in reconciling their conflicting extra-European colonial ambitions. He remained stubbornly under the spell of his ante-bellum theories. With amazing egoism he conceived himself as the instrument for remaking Europe on the foundation of a *rapprochement* between France and Germany. I am not concerned here with the question of Caillaux's guilt or abuse of his position either before or during the war. The accusations against him of treason or of intelligence with the enemy are still unproven. But Caillaux himself in his writings and in his speeches (notably his book on "*Agadir: Ma Politique Extérieure*," and his last speech in the Chamber of Deputies before his arrest) confessed to holding the opinions and following the policy outlined above. The opinions may have been well grounded and sincere. The policy may have

been wise. But France could not possibly have followed Caillaux.

Adverse judgment has been passed upon Caillaux by his fellow-countrymen because he sinned against the national consciousness of France. In this sense he betrayed France. A man who has been placed by the people in the highest position of trust is under the obligation of representing them. As an individual Joseph Caillaux had the right of an individual in a free country to think and act as he pleased to bring about a *rapprochement* with Germany. As premier he abused his delegated authority, and later as former premier the influence derived from having been premier, to bring about the triumph of a policy antipathetic to the instincts of the people who had entrusted him with leadership. Whether or not his policy was, or might have been, in accord with the permanent interests of France does not enter into the question.

Two years ago I had the privilege of explaining to "Century" readers how the French felt about Alsace and Lorraine. (1) The loss of

these two provinces affected vitally the life and thought of the generation coming to manhood and the generation born in the Third Republic. It was a question of honor, of justice, of patriotism. Bygones could not be bygones. Alsace and Lorraine were part of the living flesh of France. It was inconceivable that a Frenchman could attempt to advocate or negotiate any sort of *rapprochement* between the aggressor and the victim of aggression that did not have as its preliminary condition, before bases of compromise and mutual concession in other moot questions were agreed upon, the restoration of Alsace and Lorraine to France. In entertaining the thought that he could bridge the chasm between France and Germany without taking up first the Alsace-Lorraine question Caillaux misjudged the sentiment of national honor. This is where Caillaux went wrong before the war.

During the war he showed equal disregard of the traditions and sense of honor of his race. Perhaps he was obsessed. Perhaps the process of pure reasoning or the study of the material

factors and advantages of the problem of France's continental policy blinded him to moral and psychological considerations. Perhaps he mistook the mental attitude of thinkers *au-dessus de la mêlée*, or of Socialists who regarded every problem in the light of class instead of national interest for the feeling of the majority in France. He came to grief in forgetting the old dictum that "France does not treat with the enemy upon the soil of *la patrie*." More than once France had been compelled to do so—and with the same enemy. But it had been only when the knife was at her throat and when she stood alone without allies. This was the last straw on the camel's back. Once more the Germans had invaded France, bringing death and destruction, and treating hapless civilians with a barbarity more ruthless than ever before. They were held on the Marne and driven back to the Aisne in one of the most costly but most glorious battles of French history. And yet a former *Président du Conseil* dared to advocate in France, in neutral countries and in Italy, cessation of hostilities be-

fore the task was completed, and reconciliation with Germany, the aggressor, the invader, the assassin, the pillager. When they found out what Caillaux had been doing, the French revolted against the insult of it all. "*Bravo!*" they cried at the news of Caillaux's arrest.

But now that the war is over and the Germans have been beaten and humiliated, and especially since Alsace and Lorraine have returned to France, the attitude toward Germans is being modified. Your hatred of the man you have whipped cannot remain as intense as your hatred of the bully. The thief who has been made to disgorge stolen property is in a different relation toward you. The French have paid off old scores with a vengeance. But their superiority over Germany is due to the fact that they are not alone in imposing their will upon Germany. The victory could not have been won without the aid of Anglo-Saxondom. The peace cannot be assured without the coöperation of Anglo-Saxondom.

The French have paid a fearful price for vic-

tory. The excitement and uncertainty and necessity of straining every nerve are over. A more dangerous period of moral depression is being entered upon than at any time during the war. The French are beginning to realize for the first time what the victory has cost them. If it proves to be a real victory, with tangible and beneficial results, all right. If not—?

The unthinkable alternative is possible only if the British and ourselves withdraw or gradually lessen our military support of France. Is it true that Anglo-Saxondom considers its interests wholly extra-European, and that the continental position of France will compel her to come to a *rapprochement* with Germany after all? This is the significance of the Caillaux case. Are we going to give Joseph Caillaux the chance to say, "I told you so"?

CHAPTER IX

WHAT CONFRONTS FRANCE ¹

UNTIL Germany forced us into the war, public opinion was divided as to the advisability of getting involved in the European conflict. Most Americans knew little and cared less about what was going on in Europe. We had our prejudices and our sympathies. We condemned the invasion of Belgium and the way Germany was conducting the war. We resented the methods and the appeal of the German propaganda in the United States. But at the end of 1916 there were few who dared to prophesy that American intervention, even if it became necessary, would be popular. The astonishing events of the first months of 1917 demonstrated the absurdity of the belief in our lack of national unity. This belief was far more widespread in

¹ December, 1919.

Europe than we dreamed of and was fostered by Americans who had lived too long in exile or who had become *plus royalistes que le roi* in their championship of one or the other of the groups of belligerents. The American people did not need to be whipped into line. Every measure placed before Congress by the President to make our belligerency effective received the immediate and unanimous approval of the nation. We went into the war for all we were worth and were willing to consent to every sacrifice necessary to defeat Germany. We gave aid to France and our other allies to the full extent of our resources in man-power, materials, and money.

But the war was won only in the narrowest sense of the word when the Treaty of Versailles was signed. Whether the victory is to mean anything, whether it is to mark a permanent progress on the road toward democracy and world peace, depends upon what happens in Europe during the next few years. If we do not continue to give active aid to our allies during the period of readjustment and reconstruction, our

intervention from 1917 to 1919 will have proved a flash in the pan—no more than that.

France is the pivot upon which all turns. A strong France means the regeneration of Europe and the hope of a world peace for which we fought. A weak France means the return of the old autocratic régime in central Europe and Germany triumphant, though beaten on the field of battle. Our obligation to France, our moral responsibility to "carry on," is as great now as it was when the A. E. F. was fighting over there.

Every news despatch from Europe is impregnated with the feeling of hopelessness and impending disaster. Pessimistic forebodings seem to be the order of the day. One cannot deny or minimize the dangers. But the rôle of Cassandra is as futile to play as it is easy to play. The crisis through which the world is passing calls for constructive thinking. We have to see foundations upon which to build and be confident that we can build upon them. The disquieting radicalism that is capturing many of our best intellects assumes that the regeneration of the world

depends upon the destruction of the existing social order. Do the foundations necessarily have to be new? Some political systems and organisms have crumbled and others show serious fissures. Does unsuccessful building, however, prove that the foundations are responsible for instability? We have the most striking demonstration of the falsity of this reasoning in comparing Christ and His church. The great majority of thinking men will agree that the salvation of the world lies in reconstruction on the old foundations. That is the way we shall go about it. There is no fear that France will be swept away from her moorings. In studying what confronts France we do not need to take into consideration the possibility of a social revolution, partnership in a super-state, or the inauguration of the era of internationalism in Europe.

The prevalent idea that France has just passed through an ordeal unique in her history, and that the nation has never before been called upon to face post-bellum conditions as calamitous and as hopeless as those she faces to-day, is wholly

wrong. Let us leave to the ignorant and unthinking the belief that our experiences are unlike those of others. Human nature is never called upon to bear more than it can stand or more than previous generations have stood. The Preacher was not mistaken when he said, "There is no new thing under the sun." No historian has been able to refute Vico's theory of cycles. If we want to forecast the reaction of France to the losses and devastation of the recent war, we have every reason to study the periods in her history when through war her fairest provinces were devastated, her economic life ruined, her financial credit impaired, and her soil occupied for a long time by the enemy.

For propaganda purposes during the war it was justifiable to claim that what the Germans did between 1914 and 1919 was worse than anything that had ever happened in France and than anything that had been done by other nations at war. When I traveled through the devastated regions of northern France, I remembered what I had read of other invasions in the fourteenth,

fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. It was of a more extended region that Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, said:

I have seen with my own eyes the fields of Champagne, Brie, Gâtinais, Chartres, Dreux, Maine, and Perche, those of Vexin, Beauvais, from the country of Caux on the Seine up to Amiens, from Senlis, Soissons, Valois and all the country up to Laon and beyond towards Hainaut, hideous to look at, devoid of peasants, full of thistles and cactus.

And Jean Juvénal des Ursins, Bishop of Beauvais, wrote to King Charles:

How many churches have been burned! They take the poor farmers, they imprison them, they put them in irons in disgusting places full of vermin. They are freed only after having paid more than they possess. These brigands mistreat also the women and girls. Mills, ovens, cider-presses, every sort of agricultural and household utensil is ruined or stolen. Alas! Sire, look at your other cities and countries, like Guyenne, Toulouse, Languedoc. Everything is going to destruction and desolation—even to final perdition.

But both bishops lived to describe the wonderful recovery of France after Jeanne d'Arc compelled the English to withdraw from the devas-

tated regions. Peasants and artisans reappeared, when all were thought to be hopelessly dispersed if not dead; cities were rebuilt; industry, with a fresh impetus, entered into a more flourishing period than France had ever known; commerce, despite currency depreciated to nothing, revived and restored confidence in the coinage; and soon the cultivated lands of the kingdom were a third more than they had ever been. Charles VII became the greatest monarch in Europe. It was a far cry—and yet not many years—from the day Jeanne d'Arc sought an audience with her dispossessed and discredited sovereign to the time when the Doge of Venice said of the ruler of France that he was "the king of kings without whom nothing could be done in Europe."

To cheer up his compatriots during the war Ernest Lavisse, the aged historian, wrote a detailed account of how France was left after the wars of the Ligue. The period of strife that ended with Henri IV hurt France as much as the Hundred Years' War, but the first ten years

of peace brought a change as rapid as that after the English had been driven out. The recovery was not immediate. Prosperity began to set in five years after Henri IV entered Paris. In proportion to the population and wealth of the country, France suffered more from civil strife at the end of the sixteenth century than from the Germans in the twentieth century. Four thousand châteaux and one hundred and twenty-five thousand houses were burned and the weaving and silk industries were completely stopped. At Provins, for instance, four looms out of six hundred, and at Tours two hundred silk-weavers out of fourteen hundred were left. The cities were full of beggars, refugee peasants, and unemployed workmen. In March, 1596, the police of Paris counted nearly eight thousand refugees sleeping in one cemetery. In 1597, one hundred and fifty thousand Parisians died of the plague. Etienne Pasquier said that he saw no longer France, but the corpse of France. And yet before the end of his reign Henri IV was able to boast that every peasant could eat chicken on

Sunday. In 1598, the Venetian Ambassador wrote that France was recovering easily "just as that had happened several times in the space of a thousand years."

Prince von Bülow has given remarkable testimony of the traditional power of the French to recover after long periods of war and invasion. He declared:

France has an unchangeable faith in the indestructibility of the vital forces of the nation. No people have ever repaired as quickly as the French the results of national catastrophes; no people have found again with the same ease self-confidence and the spirit of initiative after cruel misfortune. More than once Europe believed that France had ceased to be dangerous, but each time the French nation confronted Europe again after a short delay with its former vigor or increased strength.

The confidence that we have every reason to feel in the rapid rehabilitation of France is a confidence based not only on the admirable spirit of the French race but also on the natural resources of France. The country has unrivaled wealth in her soil, her rivers, her outlet to two oceans with the longest port-studded sea-coast in Europe,

and her colonies (the richest of which are very near the mother country). France has the goodwill and friendship of the world. And we have to take into consideration the inestimable moral value of the victory and how it was won—a victory consecrated by the restoration of Alsace and Lorraine.

In the speech at Strasbourg that crowned his long career Premier Clemenceau gave the slogan for the reconstruction era. He said simply, "Work is our salvation." France has already gotten to work. The record of the year since the armistice is impressive. Monsieur Tardieu has given some of the figures: 2016 kilometers of railway reëstablished out of 2246 destroyed; 700 kilometers of canals out of 1075 again in commission; 588 repaired out of 1160 tunnels and bridges blown up; 60,000 houses rebuilt; nearly 1,000,000 acres (one fourth of the total ravished) bearing crops; virtually all the trenches filled in; and 10,000,000 meters of barbed wire torn up and removed.

To the Ciceronian cry that the republic must

not be despaired of, the French have answered: *Nihil desperandum.*

But what confronts France to-day has three elements that are without analogy in past history. Upon the problems arising from German political unity, decreasing birth-rate and a national debt that threatens bankruptcy, we must concentrate our attention. In examining these three problems, explaining the solutions that are suggested for them, and pointing out how America can aid France in solving two of them, I desire to insist upon the fact that my sources of information are French sources. The French are alive to the serious character of the problems. They have not waited for foreigners to call attention to the danger of failing to solve them promptly. They do not need to be exhorted to confront them resolutely and effectively. No nation in the world knows better than the French that God helps those who help themselves. They proved that during the war.

Americans and Britishers regard too lightly the effect of the numerical and industrial

strength of post-bellum Germany upon the rehabilitation of France. They do not comprehend how it is that her continental position handicaps France in a way that neither Great Britain nor the United States needs to fear. Writing from Paris during the Peace Conference, I attempted to set forth in "The Century" the attitude of France toward peace, and show why it necessarily differed from the attitude of her Anglo-Saxon allies.¹ As a continental European state, having a frontier in common with Germany, it is impossible for France to trust her security to the vague and as yet untried formulæ of the society of nations. She must have more positive military guarantees against a renewal of German aggression than are required by the other great powers. Owing to the wanton destruction of her industries, committed by the Germans for the very purpose of putting her out of the running as a competitor in commerce, it is reasonable for her to demand aid and protection against the intact industrial machinery of Ger-

¹ See "The Century," April, 1919.

many. Hence the importance of the supplementary treaty with Great Britain and the United States. Hence the insistence of France upon the necessity of inter-allied control of Germany's export trade until such a time as Germany has made full reparation for the damage done to French industry during the German occupation.

No one contests the argument that the best solution of this problem is the formation of a society of nations. Then France, no more than any other nation, need fear that she will be left alone to confront an unscrupulous enemy of superior numbers. But the society of nations is still in the academic stage. The surcharged atmosphere of the Conference of Paris could not have been expected to produce a visible charter for an organization that must, in the very nature of things, be born of the renunciation of particular interests for the common weal. The "Covenant of the League of Nations" did not have the germ of life in it. In the Treaty of Versailles it was an anomaly. None of my French friends expected

the United States Senate to accept without reservation this abortion.

Until such a time as world-wide public opinion is ready to force statesmen to formulate and adopt an honest and inclusive and effective covenant, the French prefer the joint guarantee of Great Britain and the United States. We can help France best by entering into this guarantee and showing Germany that we are in dead earnest in our pledge to protect France against military aggression and unfair commercial competition.

M. Eric Sjoestedt, Paris correspondent of the *Dagens Nyheter* of Stockholm, wrote in 1913 a very clever article on what he called the "depopulation scare." Monsieur Sjoestedt thought the French were bothering their heads excessively over the failure of the population of France to increase. From the economic point of view, France was better off through not increasing her population. He pointed to the competitive industries of England and Germany to prove what happens to nations that multiply too rapidly.

The prosperity and tranquillity of France were due to the fact that every one had elbow room and people could save money and buy land. From a social point of view, the limitation of families was a distinct advantage to the well-being of the nation.

Most French economists and publicists were far from accepting these opinions. They looked on the decreasing natality of France as a source of economic and social weakness. They had their grave misgivings about the manner in which French surplus capital was being invested. And they wondered about the military inferiority of France in the face of Germany.

This anxiety was also dismissed lightly by the Swedish journalist. He said:

Remains the military point of view. With her present population France is perfectly able to hold her own against Germany: for nations cannot use their full numerical strength in war. It is physically impossible to put millions of men in the field against each other: they could neither be fed nor directed.

How strange assertions like this read now that we have been through the Great War! Of

course the French military authorities were not as unconcerned as Monsieur Sjoestedt. To make up for the inferiority of numbers, the law increasing obligatory service from two to three years was passed just before the war. The invasion of France and the occupation of Belgium and northern France for more than four years by the Germans, despite Russian and British intervention immediately and Italian and American intervention later, is proof that the possession of a much larger population gives the bigger nation an overwhelming initial advantage that the most closely knit alliances are unable to offset. France now relies upon a defensive alliance with Great Britain and America. But will it not take time to mobilize and train and transport our armies to France? And are we sure of the future tendencies of Russia?

The head-lines of French newspapers and reviews show very clearly that the molders of public opinion are alive to the dangers of the present situation. Glancing through my last mail from France, I find these headings: "France is a

dying country"; "The decrease of the birth-rate"; "The problem of depopulation"; "We must increase our birth-rate"; "Warning—We must look out!"; "Let us repeople France"; "For large families"; "The struggle against depopulation." All tell the same sad tale—statistics, reasons for the evil, dangers that await France, remedies.

In the last normal year before the war (1913) the increase in population per thousand inhabitants in central and western Europe was as follows:

Germany	14.1
Great Britain	11.5
Austria-Hungary	11.4
Italy	11.3
France	0.7

One of the prophets whose voice and pen have warned France of the danger ahead summed up the problem in a single sentence. Emile Picard said: "At this rate it would require 370 years for our population to double, while Germany in a century has almost tripled her population." A

Japanese correspondent writing from Paris put the situation more brutally in the sweeping statement, "Each year the population of France is diminishing: one can therefore reasonably predict that at the end of this century France will, because of this fact, disappear from the list of nations."

If we are inclined to protest against this startling conclusion, which seems to make hopeless any permanent good arising out of the victory over Germany, there are competent French authorities who are not less positive that France is going to impotence and destruction through the failure to procreate a new generation. In his pastoral letter for Easter, 1917, the Archbishop of Auch wrote that while less than a century ago France was at the head of all the peoples of Europe, to-day she counts for only one tenth. In actual increase of population, counting in all the little countries with a tithe or less than a tithe of her own population, France was sixteenth on the list of the seventeen European countries.

M. Paul Bureau, of the Catholic University of Paris, declares that unless there is a sudden and sweeping change in the demographic charts the French nation is doomed to extinction. The famous Dr. Bertillon, who has worked for twenty years to arouse the French to the breakers ahead, insists that the crisis is of recent origin. From 1856 to 1866 France averaged 1,000,000 births a year. In proportion to other countries, she ought to have had 1,400,000. From 1867 to 1882, the annual increase fluctuated between 1,000,000 and 900,000. The fall in the succeeding decades of the Third Republic was rapid—800,000, 700,000, 600,000.

“We are falling behind now about 500,000 births per year in proportion to other countries,” says Dr. Bertillon. “Our death-rate is increasing: each year 300,000 above fifty years are dying. If the birth-rate continues to fall in the same degree, in eighty years there will be no France. Reducing infant mortality is a drop in the bucket. In 1913, only 83,000 babies died. The best of care and skill could hardly have saved

a quarter of these. The only remedy for France is to have as many births as other nations."

An analysis of comparative population of France and Germany shows only one fourth more Germans than Frenchmen between forty and fifty, and two fifths more between twenty and forty. But between seventeen and nineteen—and certainly under that age—Germany has more than twice as many males as has France. The losses in the war do not change greatly this proportion. And the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France brings an increase of population that scarcely balances the dead and disabled of the French armies. The latest statistics at hand show an excess of deaths over births in 1917 of 269,838; and in 1918, 389,575.

The failure of France to breed a new generation constitutes a military inferiority that no alliances can make up for. The stipulations of the Treaty of Versailles are only temporary. Germany bowed to force. France will not be able to continue to apply that force when the British and American armies are far away and demobil-

ized. The Anglo-American Treaty helps for the time being. France will have a breathing-spell. This will give her time to make children. Make children she must. France realizes that.

The handicap from depopulation is far greater than military inferiority. Granted that we are able to hold Germany to her promises to limit armies and the manufacture of war materials, we cannot conceive of a larger racial unit being kept under the economic control, or being checked in economic expansion, by a smaller racial unit, especially when the smaller unit is inferior in the tools of production. France must have a large new generation to man her factories, to furnish the home market for manufactured articles, to act as agents for trade abroad.

Decrease in the density of population, or failure to increase the density of population, makes impossible further development of public works, canals, railways, mining, and industrial enterprises. Far-seeing Frenchmen do not hesitate to hold up the example of Germany before their compatriots. In 1880, with a population of less

than 50,000,000, Germany had an emigration overflow of 200,000 per annum. In 1914, with a population of nearly 70,000,000, emigration had ceased, and from 600,000 to 800,000 foreigners entered Germany each year to work in the fields and in the mines and factories. This refutes the theory that increase in population brings economic and social distress by making work harder to find. Germany was able to increase her industries, her means of transportation, her cities, her agricultural yield, for the very reason that the population grew so rapidly and thus made possible greater collective effort and expenditure. In America we have had the experience of Germany. Our rapid increase of wealth and power is largely due to the rapid increase of population.

Another serious phase of depopulation is its menace to the influence of France overseas. With a colonial empire second only to that of Great Britain and mostly won since the population of France became stationary, the French have been able to carry on and expand up to this

point only because the flower of France felt the sacred call to a military career. I have had the fortune to live in intimate association with many men of my own age and older in France. It is a generation born between 1850 and 1880. In other circumstances than those of the humiliating defeat and the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, very many of these men—the men who have made possible the colonial success of France—would not have chosen a military career.

It has been difficult enough to get civil administrators for the French colonies. Of bona-fide colonists there have been very few. Now that the military incentive may be lacking, how can France hope to induce her good men—or even enough men—to enter the colonial career? There is no inducement of caste. Remains the reason that has sent Britons overseas—surplus population. The present conditions may be maintained in the French colonies for a decade or two. But that is the limit. Eventually there must be more Frenchmen or there will be fewer colonies.

Qualified French observers are virtually unanimous in denying that the reason for a low birth-rate is the general economic reason, given to explain smaller families the world over. In the upper classes the economic reason may be true as it is in other countries. But France is the last country in Europe to be able to advance this reason as applicable to the mass of her population. For France has greater natural wealth and a better distribution of land and affords more opportunities for making a living than any other European country except Russia. And there is an abnormal discrepancy between the decrease in the French birth-rate and that of other countries. Dr. Richet said frankly in a recent address to the *Académie de Médecine*:

The one and only cause of depopulation in France is economy. We do not want to have children because that entails spending money. It costs to lodge and feed and clothe a child, and we do not consent to go to that expense. The number of births can be what the State wishes. Decide upon the amount of the aid given to parents, and you will at the same time be sure of the number of French births. There are now 700,000 births: there will be 2,000,000 if you wish. If a child,

instead of causing the family expense, brings money to the family, the number of births will be enormous.

Dr. Richet's reason for the decreasing birth-rate is accepted by his compatriots. This is shown by the nature of the religious appeal put forth in the pastoral letters of the clergy, and the remedies, social and legislative, suggested by economists and publicists. Bishops endeavor to show that restricting the size of families is false economy and that children are really a source of wealth to the nation and eventually to every individual in the body social. The propaganda organizations for increasing the birth-rate believe that the state must intervene to make it possible to raise children without the financial inconveniences—penalties, one might say—that now attend the parents of large families. The advocacy of legislation to stamp out abortion has been superseded by bills to give state aid to parents by means of premiums, lessening of taxation, and freedom from military service for the father after the birth of the third child. The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate are considering bills to

modify the civil code in such a way as to allow parents the right to make a will, so that property and business may be saved from arbitrary division and dissolution.

The question of taxation means more in relation to the problem of natality in France than in other countries. I know this from personal experience as the father of four children raised in France. The vicious system of increasing revenue by additional indirect taxation distributes the burden unfairly. Taxes on food, railway tickets, medicines, clothing, consumption of fuel and light and water, matches, theater tickets—all these means of increasing revenue act as a means of decreasing potential revenue-payers.

The legislators feel that the impulse for remedial legislation in the matter of depopulation must have behind it more than public opinion. Voters are selfish, and parents are not apt to get a square deal and to secure special privileges of state aid and lighter taxes unless their electoral influence is greatly increased. The franchise in France puts the fathers of large families in

a shockingly disadvantageous position. Three fourths of the French electorate have no particular interest in the problem of what to do for the family with three children or more. And yet the other fourth represents considerably more than half the population of France. That fathers should have the right to supplementary votes for all their living children is a proposal that is being taken seriously. A bill to that effect was defeated in the Chamber of Deputies by the narrow margin of 219 against 200. The project is before the Senate now. If the defeat of Germany results in being able to cut down the standing army, there is no doubt parenthood and not age will be the criterion of exemption from military service.

A remarkably large foundation for a country of few millionaires has been established in France by Théodore Cognacq. The fund, which is managed by the *Académie de Médecine*, amounts to 50,000,000 francs. The interest is to be given yearly to ninety families of nine children or more. This year twelve thousand families applied for

the grant. The *Académie Française* is also taking part in the new movement to stimulate the birth-rate. A part of its numerous *prix de vertu* are now being awarded to parents who have brought up large families. From the different foundations twenty-one families received in 1916 prizes of from 1000 to 2000 francs. The average number of children to the family was sixteen, of whom fourteen were living. In 1917, for two big prizes of 10,000 francs each, there were four hundred applications. Thirty of the families had more than fifteen children. It is a mistake to think that patriarchal life has entirely disappeared from France.

Have I not said enough to convince my readers that the problem of depopulation is not hopeless of solution and that intelligent efforts are being made in France to check the decreasing birth-rate?

In her finances, France is suffering from a stupid and short-sighted fiscal policy before and during the war. I am not going to quote figures as I did in illustrating the depopulation problem.

The total of France's indebtedness is not a matter of interest. For in speaking of money, figures have lost all meaning since 1914. We have to revise our ideas of the seemingly unlimited possibilities of the extension of credit. No banker or economist had ever dreamed of a world war in which the belligerents could continue to borrow from one another and from their own nationals year after year without thought of how the debts were piling up beyond the limit of interest payment, let alone beyond the possibility of liquidation.

"There is n't so much money in the world!" cried Thiers, when Bismarck demanded six billion francs as a war indemnity in 1871. Bismarck probably thought so, too, for he reduced the amount to five billions. And yet to-day we have imposed upon Germany twenty-five times as much as the 1871 indemnity as the *minimum* she must pay. France, with scarcely more population than in 1871, is confronted with an annual budget of from eighteen to twenty-two billion francs per annum. The discrepancy of four

billions per annum in the budget estimates of experts shows how far we have traveled since the time of Thiers!

Few Frenchmen are counting upon the German war indemnity to ease the financial situation of France. If the Germans pay for the destruction and the requisitions during the period of invasion and occupation, we shall be surprised. That bill mounts up beyond the financial capacity of Germany. If the huge additional sum for pensions is exacted, the hopes of the most optimistic Frenchmen will be realized. The war debts, with the appalling annual interest exceeding the total revenue of France before the war, remain to be met. We are told that France has increased her revenue from five billion to twelve billion francs since 1914. But let us not be deceived by this statement. An important part of the increase comes from taxing war profits, and ceases in 1920. The war-profits tax was not revenue. It was simply a compulsory discount on government orders.

When we examine the financial situation of

France with the question in mind as to how France is to make both ends meet, the answer is that France cannot hope to pay her obligations, much less her current expenses. Is bankruptcy the alternative? That depends upon what we mean by bankruptcy. It would be bankruptcy if France were to default interest payment on the sums borrowed abroad or on what is owed abroad for purchases made during the war. We may be sure that this will never happen. Some critics are saying that because France is already seeking new credits in America for payment of bills due and for purchases and for interest due our Government, we can infer that France is insolvent. The inference is wrong. These new credits are being sought not because of lack of money to meet obligations but because of unwillingness to make huge payments abroad in dollars when the franc is so greatly depreciated. France can now honor and will be able in the future to honor all her foreign debts both as to interest and principal. But she asks her more fortunate allies to wait until exchange returns to normal,

and to help her stabilize exchange by refraining from compelling her to buy an enormous number of dollars each month.

In considering the payment of obligations to her own citizens, France does not need to take the same attitude. The French people will have to realize that they are France and that they cannot be creditors and debtors at the same time. More than ten per cent. of the French internal war loans is water—in one of the loans nearly thirty per cent. The men who managed the treasury of France during the war were not as confident of the patriotism of the people as the men who managed the army. None hesitated to call upon the French to give their husbands and sons. When it came to money—well, that was another matter! High interest and the hope of gain by issuing the loans below par were the inducements held out to thrifty investors.

Perhaps during the war no other policy was possible. Many who paid the price of blood would have refused to pay the price of gold. French character is curious and incomprehensible

when it comes to money matters. It is the one place where the French lose their wonderful sense of proportion and where they are incapable of reasoning things out. But now the French nation is confronted with the necessity of paying for the war. France has not been impoverished by the war. Far from it! Outside of the invaded regions the country has increased in prosperity since 1914. There is more money in the savings banks and in other forms of investment at home than in 1914. The person who looks on the gloomy side of French finances is the one who refuses to study the actual financial condition of the French people. There is plenty of money in France: it has only changed hands. The Government did not try to pay for the war during the war. Instead, the money that ought to have come into the French treasury as taxes, came in as loans. It is ridiculous to object that the French could not have stood heavy additional taxation. What they put into the war loans represented money, and a good part of it money earned in the war and because of the war.

The financial remedy for France is to decrease her internal war debts by drastic measures. The loans are widely distributed and are mostly carried by those who can afford to forego them. For if the interest and principal are to be paid, the money must come from those who hold the loan certificates. Some sort of veiled repudiation of the internal war debt will have to be devised. None can now object if the capital is fixed at the actual sum paid in by the subscriber. This will be the first step. Then the interest rate will be cut. Judicial fiscal legislation will be able to reduce the indebtedness of the Government toward its own citizens to a quarter of the present formidable total without disorganizing industry or causing undue hardship to the citizens as a whole.

In great crises of history the Government should have the same right to call upon capital as it has to call upon man-power. For the common weal every Frenchman left his work and his family and spent years in fighting. A million and a half died and another million was incapacitated. There was no distinction of class in mili-

tary service; but the sacrifice was far greater for the common workingman who had nothing but his hands than for the man who could fight and die with the comfortable feeling that he was not leaving his family penniless. Now that the war is over, the portion of the body politic which has money is called upon in turn to make a sacrifice essential for the salvation of France.

The sacrifice is inevitable. Otherwise interest payments will demand more than the annual revenue and a crash will follow more disastrous to the moneyed classes than a judicious levy on capital. Despite their reluctance to pay out money, the common sense of the French nation is bound to prevail. The French will not let the financial question drift or become a source of class antagonism. In the next Chamber of Deputies we shall undoubtedly see introduced and put into effect a plan for reducing the internal debt by distributing the sacrifices and avoiding the appearance of a confiscatory measure dictated by the pressure of the laboring classes.

Admiration for France? We have always had

that. Sympathy with France? We have never failed to show that. Confidence in France? By her own deeds France herself instilled that in us. But during the period of reconstruction we cannot afford to become indifferent or cool in our attitude toward France. France has the right to continue to look to us for the whole-hearted, tangible, practical aid we gave her during the period of our military intervention. We must not be unwilling to do our full share and more than our share in international police work. We must help with the exchange problem. We must extend further credits. We must favor France in tariff schedules. Honor and gratitude and interest alike demand that we should not forget our war cry, "*Vive la France!*"

THE END

